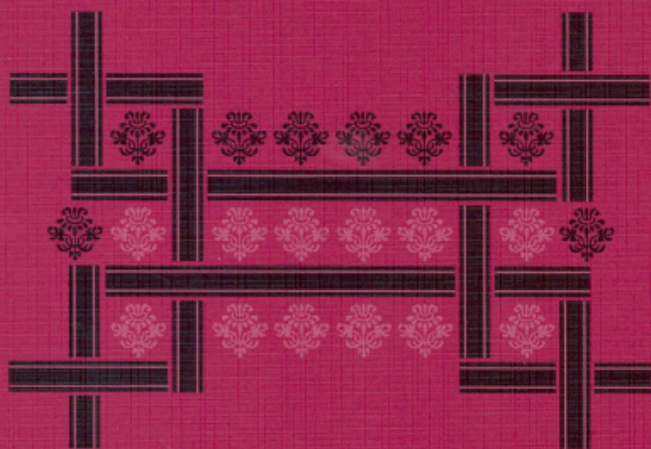


The Sceptical Road

AENESIDEMUS' APPROPRIATION OF HERACLITUS



BY

ROBERTO POLITO

BRILL PHILOSOPHIA ANTIQUA

THE SCEPTICAL ROAD

PHILOSOPHIA ANTIQUA

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ROBERTO POLITO

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For my parents

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PREFACE

This book is a revised and expanded version of my Cambridge Ph. D. dissertation ‘Aenesidemus’ Interpretation of Heraclitus’, submitted in 1999. Gratitude is due, above all, to my Ph.D. supervisor in Cambridge, David Sedley, for his continuous advice and support. No less gratitude I express to Fernanda Decleva Caizzi, who supervised my Milanese *Tesi di Laurea*, in which I first encountered what was to become the subject of this book. The book has also benefited from the useful comments which I received from Geoffrey Lloyd, Malcolm Schofield, Miles Burnyeat, Gisela Striker and Tony Long. I also would like to thank the Brill anonymous referee for her/his comments. None of them, however, should be assumed to agree with the views expressed in this book. Regrettably, not all works on ancient Scepticism which came out after 1999 could be discussed as extensively as I wished.

An English translation of the testimonia (the Loeb, when available, with changes) is provided in the main text. Greek (or Latin) texts can be found in the footnotes. Greek and Latin key words are sometimes left in their original, depending on the argument’s requirement. Heraclitus’ fragments are referred to according to Diels-Kranz’s numbering of them; Galen’s works are referred to according to the Kühn edition (when available), or according to the authoritative one.

During the years of work, either doctoral or post-doctoral, which the book incorporates, I benefited from the financial help of (reverse chronological order): the Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington DC; the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome; the Faculty of Classics, Cambridge; St. John’s College, Cambridge; the Philosophy Department of the Università degli Studi of Milan.

INTRODUCTION

Scepticism has recently attracted much attention from philosophers, and its challenge to knowledge is the object of many discussions. This has also produced a renewed interest in ancient Scepticism. Unfortunately, the loss of the writings of all ancient Sceptics but one makes it difficult for us to have a comprehensive picture. The only extant work is that of Sextus Empiricus (late second century AD), who belongs to a late phase of the tradition. Besides Sextus, there are a few minor sources, either opponents or authors of philosophical handbooks. Although these other accounts of Scepticism are most of the time too condensed to be compared with Sextus', when comparisons do prove possible Sextus' formulation of Scepticism appears to be in many respects unrepresentative of the whole tradition.¹

The situation is so discouraging that some commentators explicitly state that their discussion will consider Sextus and his Scepticism alone, without covering earlier representatives of this tradition.² This approach is methodologically sound. The problem is that many Sceptics lie beneath Sextus' skin,³ Sextus also being a compiler of earlier material, and that his presentation of Scepticism is not, therefore, a single and coherent whole. Thus, addressing the question of the historical development of ancient Scepticism, so as to isolate different phases and approaches, is not a subordinate job, of a somewhat scholarly flavour, in relation to discussing its conceptual framework, but a condition and an integral part of it.⁴

Of those very few Sceptics who have eluded anonymity one is the actual founder of the school, Aenesidemus of Cnossus (mid-first century BC). He challenged all philosophical assertions concerning the nature of things, and also countered weaker formulations of scepticism such as the fallibilism of the late Academy, founding a new sceptical school which professed uncompromising doubt. Aenesidemus named his school after Pyrrho, a maverick wise man who lived

¹ See below note 4.

² Barnes (1983a), p. 8; *idem* (1990), p. vii.

³ Barnes (1983b), p. 159.

⁴ Barnes himself investigates Diogenes' account of Scepticism in Barnes (1992).

between 360 and 270 BC, and whose attempt at living a life without beliefs gave rise to a flourishing tradition of extravagant tales. Aenesidemus' own work is lost, but his position can be recovered, to a certain extent, from reports of later authors.

However, Aenesidemus is a very paradoxical figure. In spite of his well-established Scepticism, there does seem to have been a 'dogmatic' streak in his philosophy, in that he described Scepticism as a 'path' towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, a Presocratic philosopher who made several claims as to how things are, and professed to be the spokesman of the divine and universal Reason. The precise meaning of the 'path' metaphor is uncertain, but it seems at least to imply fondness for Heraclitus, something which Sextus finds incompatible with genuine Scepticism (*PH* 1.210-212).

In addition to this, there is a body of difficult reports found in Sextus and Tertullian, in which Aenesidemus is associated with Heraclitus as regards his views on the soul, truth, and other issues on which one would have expected a Sceptic to suspend judgement instead. Unfortunately, the relevant material has come down to us in the form of short doxographical reports, and therefore the precise meaning of the doctrines regarding which Aenesidemus is associated with Heraclitus (and which go far beyond anything Heraclitus himself ever thought of) remains controversial, no less than the formula Αἰνισίδημος κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον, by which Aenesidemus is coupled with Heraclitus.

Hence a problem arises, identified by one eminent scholar as "the most puzzling of all problems raised by ancient Scepticism",⁵ the solution of which is bound to affect our evaluation of Aenesidemus' place in ancient Scepticism, and which has therefore set the scene for a long-term debate. Some commentators have rejected Sextus' report at *PH* 1.210-212, that Aenesidemus presented Scepticism as a 'path' towards Heraclitus' philosophy, questioning Sextus' reliability.⁶ Others have interpreted this text as evidence for a separate Heraclitean phase within Aenesidemus' thought.⁷ Others have hypothesised that Aenesidemus' fondness for Heraclitus relates to some common principles shared by Heracliteanism and Scepticism.⁸ Others have

⁵ Brochard (1887), p. 227.

⁶ Diels (1879), pp. 209-212; Zeller (1903), pp. 36-46.

⁷ Saisset (1840), pp. 188-199; Brochard (1887), pp. 272-289; Capone Braga (1931); Rist (1970); Dal Pra (1989), II pp. 392-411; Tarrant (1981); Hankinson (1995), pp. 129-131.

⁸ Natorp (1884); von Arnim (1888), pp. 79-85.

suggested that Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism did not amount to a positive doctrine, but merely to a *reductio ad absurdum* of Stoicism, the major dogmatic school in Aenesidemus' day, and one which claimed Heraclitus as its forerunner.⁹

However, in spite of the long-term debate, no satisfactory resolution of the problem has been propounded. Rejecting Sextus' testimony at *PH* 1.210, as Diels suggested that we do, is arbitrary: why should Sextus have made up the story? However, the consideration which, I believe, led Diels to advance this solution is worth considering. *PH* 1.210 seems to suggest that Aenesidemus sympathised with a Scepticising Heracliteanism based on the denial of the principle of non-contradiction, that is, the principle which enables us to distinguish between truth and falsehood:

Aenesidemus maintained that Scepticism is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, since to hold that opposite properties 'appear' in one and the same object precedes holding that they really 'exist' in it.

However, the doctrines which Aenesidemus elsewhere attributes to Heraclitus seem plainly dogmatic, somehow relating to the Stoic interpretation of him. Thus, we are dealing with two different kinds of Heracliteanism: a Scepticising and a Stoicising one. How do they fit together? Actually they do not. But it may be the case, Diels hypothesises, that Aenesidemus was merely reformulating Stoic-Heraclitean doctrines in such a way as to bring about their refutation, and that an intermediate doxographical source attributed these doctrines directly to Aenesidemus, without making it clear that Aenesidemus put them forward only dialectically. As a result, Sextus misunderstood the point, and made up his report at *PH* 1.210-212.

Diels' solution is extreme, but the difficulty which he intended to remedy is a serious one. Against Diels' hypothesis that Aenesidemus' role was that of a reporter, Natorp objects that, even if this hypothesis may work as regards Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines, it defies what Sextus says at *PH* 1.210-212.¹⁰ In fact, Diels himself was aware of this problem, and solved it in the way already mentioned. Natorp's objection can easily be reversed against Natorp himself: his hypothesis of a Heracliteanising Scepticism may perhaps account for the Sextus report at *PH* 1.210-212, which establishes a positive relationship between Scepticism and Heracliteanism. But what about the

⁹ Burkhard (1973), in some ways anticipated by Diels (see note above 6).

¹⁰ Natorp (1884), p. 81.

doctrines that Aenesidemus put forward καθ' Ἡράκλειτον? The Stoicising colouring of at least some of them does not appear to lend support to the hypothesis that Aenesidemus' intention was to praise Heraclitus for some Sceptical features of his philosophy; or at least it requires explanation. However, Natorp is elusive on the matter, his primary concern being not so much to explain *why* a Sceptic should have sympathised with these doctrines,¹¹ as *how* he could sympathise with theoretical beliefs in general.¹² But this is not of much help.

In fact, however, even if one leaves aside Aenesidemus' Stoic-coloured doctrines καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, and considers the Sextus report at *PH* 1.210-212 alone, any hypothesis that Aenesidemus claimed Heraclitus as a forerunner of the Sceptics, and assimilated the two philosophies, conflicts with the fact that Aenesidemus makes Scepticism a 'path' towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, and not the other way round. In so doing, Aenesidemus seems to distinguish between the two philosophies, and to side with Heracliteanism. Thus, some scholars have posited a separate, post-sceptical, phase within Aenesidemus' thought.¹³ However, if it is true that Aenesidemus eventually dropped Scepticism, advising his pupils to follow Heraclitus, why did later Sceptics grant Aenesidemus the status of an authority?

This last difficulty led other scholars to hypothesise that, on the contrary, Aenesidemus' Heraclitean period *preceded* the Sceptical one.¹⁴ Against this proposal, however, it can be said that, when presenting Scepticism as a 'path' towards Heraclitus, whether or not Aenesidemus is siding with Heraclitus, he is speaking as a Sceptic. For if Aenesidemus was not yet a Sceptic, why should the question of the relationship between Scepticism and other philosophies matter to

¹¹ Natorp discusses this question only as regards the criterion of 'that-which-appears-to-us-all' at Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8 (see below ch. II.2), and Heraclitus' *coincidentia oppositorum*, which is referred to by Sextus at *PH* 1.210 when presenting Aenesidemus' path thesis. In the case of the other Heraclitean doctrines attributed to Aenesidemus Natorp merely addresses the question of what sayings or aspects of Heraclitus' philosophy might have suggested to Aenesidemus his idiosyncratic interpretation.

¹² To this purpose, Natorp (1884), p. 87 resumes the formula ἀδοξάστως, by which Sextus advocates the Sceptic's yielding to appearances, and suggests that Aenesidemus might have had sympathy for the philosophy of Heraclitus in the form of a mere affection (*phantasia*), with no actual commitment. Along similar lines, Frede (1987), p. 257 picks up the case of Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον as possible evidence that "a Pyrrhonian may feel inclined, as a matter of sheer speculation, toward one theoretical view rather than another".

¹³ See below note 7.

¹⁴ Dal Pra (1989), pp. 397-399; Rist (1970).

him?¹⁵ Saisset's hypothesis that Aenesidemus put forward his thesis as regards Heraclitus with hindsight, in order to justify his previous commitment to Heracliteanism once he became a Sceptic, does not incur this objection, but conflicts with the fact that Aenesidemus makes Scepticism an intermediate step towards Heracliteanism.

Furthermore, none of the developmental accounts which have been proposed, whatever the sequence in which one places Aenesidemus' alleged dogmatic phase in relation to his Scepticism, satisfactorily addresses the *aporia* which I formulated while expounding Diels' position. Almost all those who adopt a developmental account describes Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism as an eclectic (Stoicising) dogmatism, but not one of them has so far explained how Scepticism could be presented as a path towards such dogmatism. Capone Braga for his part suggests that Aenesidemus eventually abandoned mainstream Scepticism for a Scepticising form of Heracliteanism, based on the denial of the principle of non-contradiction, in order to provide Scepticism with its metaphysical foundation. But it remains unclear how Aenesidemus' seemingly dogmatic 'Heraclitean' doctrines relate to this Scepticising Heracliteanism.

The very idea that Aenesidemus' presentation of Scepticism as a 'path' towards Heracliteanism presupposes his commitment to the latter has been challenged. Against this reading, von Arnim contends that Aenesidemus' thesis merely establishes a logical priority of Scepticism over Heracliteanism, and that there is no reason to think that Aenesidemus himself was ever committed to Heracliteanism, either before, or while, or after being a Sceptic.¹⁶ Aenesidemus' point, in von Arnim's view, is that there is an affinity between Scepticism and Heracliteanism: both philosophies assert the flux of things, which provides the foundation for the Sceptics' claim, cognate to Heraclitus' *coincidentia oppositorum*, that one and the same thing has opposite appearances. As a result of the acknowledgement of this

¹⁵ Besides, to which Scepticism is Aenesidemus referring? The one he will himself establish after his alleged Heraclitean phase? But how could he be referring to something which did not exist yet? Nor is it likely that he refers to the late Academy's Scepticism (Dal Pra (1989), II p. 407), since Sextus at *PH* 1.210 speaks of ἡ ὑμετέρα ἀγωγή, that is, Pyrrhonism. Aenesidemus for his part never describes the Academics as 'Sceptics'. In fact, he does not seem to have used this word at all (see below n. 62), and its occurrence at *PH* 1.210 is likely to be due to Sextus. Aenesidemus' own expression presumably was 'Pyrrho's philosophy' or the like, at least to judge from Photius.

¹⁶ Von Arnim (1888), pp. 81-82.

affinity, Aenesidemus set out to provide his own account of Heraclitus culminating, in von Arnim's view, in the flux motif.

Von Arnim's dominating claim concerning flux remains a matter of speculation, at least in the absence of any other evidence beyond echoes in Philo, whose value as a source for Aenesidemus is controversial.¹⁷ His proposal has therefore found only very few supporters.¹⁸ There is, however, one element of it which has had fortune of its own: the suggestion that Aenesidemus purported to provide an interpretation of Heraclitus, of which his extant doctrines καθ' Ἡράκλειτον are instances. The suggestion is resumed by Schmekel in the small chapter on Aenesidemus in his work on 'positive' philosophy in antiquity.¹⁹ The difference is that, while von Arnim identifies the claim concerning the affinity between Scepticism and Heracliteanism as Aenesidemus' point, Schmekel shifts the emphasis to the exegetical undertaking which, in his view, Aenesidemus purported to justify with making Scepticism a path towards Heracliteanism. Thus, Schmekel concludes that Aenesidemus' role in the picture is that of a mere reporter, as, for that matter, had already Diels hypothesised, though on different grounds.

Burkhard's interpretation too starts from a reading of *PH* 1.210-212 which is similar to von Arnim's, but develops in a different direction. The link established by Aenesidemus between Heracliteanism and Scepticism by means of the path metaphor involves, in Burkhard's view, the method of antilogy. It is this method that Aenesidemus, professing to be interpreting Heraclitus, applied to Stoic-Heraclitean doctrines, arguing on opposite sides, so as to lead them to absurd conclusions (for instance: time, which is incorporeal, is a body; the ruling-part-of-the-soul, which is inside us, is outside; intellect, which is different from the senses, is the same as them). On this view, Aenesidemus' interest in Heraclitus' philosophy is merely dialectical, on the model of the Academics, who used to adopt the

¹⁷ Burkhard (1973), pp. 182-194 argues that Philo's arguments against the reliability of the senses do not incorporate material from Aenesidemus, but from Academic sources. Burkhard also provides a detailed *status quaestionis*. It is possible that Philo had an intermediate Academic source, but the derivation from Aenesidemus is in effect hardly debatable; see Janáček (1981). The question, however, is whether or not Philo can be used as a source for Aenesidemus' Heraclitus; see below p. 9.

¹⁸ One of them is Tarrant (1985), p. 163 n. 63, who, however, admits that "extant Heraclitean doctrines associated with Aenesidemus do not bring in the flux-doctrine at all".

¹⁹ Schmekel (1938), pp. 310-312.

opponents' doctrines in order to argue against them. Thus, Burkhard rejects both the hypothesis of a dogmatic period and that of a Heracliteanising Scepticism, and suggests, like Diels before him, that Aenesidemus' alleged Heracliteanism amounts to a *reductio ad absurdum* of Stoic Heracliteanism.

Against this proposal, one may observe that no member of the Academy would ever present his attitude towards his opponents in a way comparable to that in which Aenesidemus presents his attitude towards Heraclitus: Aenesidemus' making Scepticism a 'path' towards Heracliteanism definitely hints at the idea that Heraclitus' philosophy and Scepticism *positively* relate to each other. Burkhard hypothesises that this positive relation is limited to the method of antilogy, which on Burkhard's account Aenesidemus identified as the scope of Heraclitus' *coincidentia oppositorum*. However, the link which Aenesidemus establishes between the two philosophies does not seem to involve the method of antilogy, but, rather, the way of interpreting conflicting appearances (Sextus gives the example of honey tasting sweet to healthy people and yet bitter to the jaundiced). Moreover, Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' theses are not reported in the form of *antilogiai* (except in the unique case of *M.* 9.33), and Burkhard's reconstruction of them in such a form is arbitrary.²⁰

* * *

The disagreement among commentators is due to the fact that Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' material is ambiguous, and admits of opposite interpretations, none of which, however, has so far succeeded in offering a comprehensive and consistent account. A preliminary task is to identify a body of testimonia. Sources for Aenesidemus' 'Heracliteanism' are Sextus and Tertullian. Von Arnim adds Philo, who appropriates material from the tropes in order to make the point that no knowledge of sense-objects is given. In this context, Philo invokes flux. Shall we conclude, then, that Aenesidemus invoked flux in the first place, and that flux provides the core of his Sceptical 'Heracliteanism'? As a matter of fact, Philo does not

²⁰ More recent contributions do not significantly modify the picture. Hankinson (1995), pp. 129-131 sides with the hypothesis of a dogmatic phase by appealing to what Sextus says at *PH* 1.210-212 — a passage whose meaning is, however, more controversial than Hankinson appears to believe. Viano (1989) endorses Natorp's interpretation. Spinelli (1997) does not make a clear choice between the different options available. Pérez (1993) understands Aenesidemus as depending on both the Stoic and the Platonic interpretations of Heraclitus.

mention either Aenesidemus or Heraclitus. He is not reporting someone else's view, but offering his own. This makes it difficult for us to adjudicate what belongs to whom. It is safe to use Philo only to the extent that he agrees with other sources. He does so, in some respects, in the case of his implicit account of the tropes. However, when it comes to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus, no flux is found either in Sextus or in Tertullian, and therefore von Arnim's hypothesis is to remain a matter of speculation.

Among the sources on Aenesidemus and Heraclitus, Diogenes Laertius is to be counted. As I shall argue, Diogenes too incorporates relevant material, although he is not aware of doing so. Hence the question arises of what access Diogenes, and other ancient authors, had to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus. In pursuing this question, I shall discuss Aenesidemus' claim that Scepticism is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, and Sextus' reply to Aenesidemus at *PH* 1.210-212.

The Sextus passage is important, because it addresses the question how Aenesidemus' Scepticism and 'Heracliteanism' relate to one another. However, a satisfactory account must also deal with the rest of the material. The Stoicising content of most of Aenesidemus' doctrines καθ' Ἡράκλειτον defies the fact that Aenesidemus establishes a *positive* relationship between Scepticism and Heracliteanism, expressed by means of the 'path' metaphor. Thus, I shall examine the doctrines of Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, and try to rescue their meaning. My primary concern will be to detect whether and how these doctrines relate to Scepticism, rather than to recover their Heraclitean background, these being two different questions. I shall nonetheless address also this second question to the extent that it throws light onto Aenesidemus' strategy.

The topic of Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον which I consider first is his criterion of truth, which is centred upon 'that-which-appears-to-all'. This is in the second chapter of the book. I try to recover the meaning of basic notions of Aenesidemus such as that of 'appearance'. This discussion concludes in the third chapter, where I investigate echoes to Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' epistemology in Sceptical and in Empiricist literature.

In the second part of the book I examine Aenesidemus' Heraclitean account of the soul, and discuss its pedigree. The soul, in his view, is one's breath. Sensation comes about through the breath's flowing through certain channels of the body, and thinking is a by-

product of sensing. In the fourth chapter (the first of the second part) I explore the medical pedigree of this theory, and advance the hypothesis that Aenesidemus appropriates, and attributes it, to Heraclitus, because it was in a way foundational of his phenomenalism.

The fifth chapter focuses on Sextus' account of Heraclitus at *M.* 7.126-134. The precise relationship of this extended passage with Aenesidemus is a matter of controversy, but is worth exploring, because this testimony is the only one in which Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines are reported as parts of an argument, and not only in the form of doxographical items. Within this discussion I also address the question of the relationship between the Heraclitus of the Stoics and that of Aenesidemus.

Two appendices are added. In one I discuss Aenesidemus' bizarre claim καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, that time is a body. In the other I discuss a minor testimony on Aenesidemus on motion, the relevance of which to his Heracliteanism is disputed.

PART ONE

KNOWLEDGE

CHAPTER ONE

THE SOURCES

I.1 *Diogenes and Aenesidemus (Diog. Laert. 9.106)*

Two sources for Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism have so far been acknowledged: Sextus and Tertullian. Sextus is the one which has been studied more carefully.²¹ Tertullian has only been very recently investigated at some depth.²² Beside the two sources, Diogenes Laertius 9.106 is to be added to the survey. In this chapter I shall show how Diogenes' text needs to be emended, and why it is relevant to Aenesidemus' 'Heracliteanism', rather than his Scepticism (I adopt this distinction only provisionally, for the sake of simplicity), and I shall investigate the inferences that this attribution enables us to make concerning the reception of Aenesidemus' Heraclitean material in Sceptical sources.

Diogenes at 9.106 writes:

Aenesidemus in the first book of his *Pyrrhonist Discourses* says that Pyrrho does not determine anything dogmatically, because of the opposition, and that he follows appearances instead. He says so also in his works *Against Wisdom* and *On Inquiry*. And also Zeuxis, Aenesidemus' pupil, in his *On the Double Discourses*, Antiochus of Laodicea, and Apelles in his *Agrippa* posit appearances alone. Thus, that-which-appears is a criterion according to the Sceptics, as Aenesidemus also says, as well as Epicurus. Democritus, by contrast, says that none of the appearances is a criterion, and that some of them [or: they] are not [a criterion?].²³

²¹ Burkhard (1973) provides the best analysis of the relevant testimonia in Sextus.

²² I myself investigate the sources, plan and motivations of Tertullian's *De anima* in Polito (1992).

²³ Καὶ Αἰνεσίδημος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν Πυρρωνείων λόγων οὐδέν φησιν ὀρίζειν τὸν Πύρρωνα δογματικῶς διὰ τὴν ἀντιλογίαν, τοῖς δὲ φαινομένοις ἀκολουθεῖν. ταῦτα δὲ λέγει κἀν τῷ Κατὰ σοφίας κἀν τῷ Περὶ ζητήσεως. ἀλλὰ καὶ Ζεῦξις ὁ Αἰνεσιδήμου γνῶριμος ἐν τῷ Περὶ διττῶν λόγων καὶ Ἀντίοχος ὁ Λαοδικεὺς καὶ Ἀπελλᾶς ἐν τῷ Ἀγρίππᾳ τιθέασιν τὰ φαινόμενα μόνα. ἔστιν οὖν κριτήριον κατὰ τοὺς σκεπτικούς τὸ φαινόμενον, ὥς καὶ Αἰνεσίδημός φησιν· οὕτω δὲ καὶ Ἐπίκουρος. Δημόκριτος δὲ μὴδὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων, τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι.

We are in the section of the *Life of Pyrrho* in which Diogenes expounds the dogmatists' criticisms of the Sceptics and the latter's reply (9.102-108). Appearances are the criterion which the Sceptics put forward against the criticism that their philosophical stance makes life impossible. Diogenes had already described the nature of this criterion at 104-105 *init.* At 105 *fin.* he invokes the authority of Pyrrho and Timon. Then, in our paragraph, Aenesidemus and some followers of his are also invoked. A comparative history of this criterion follows, in which Aenesidemus is coupled with Epicurus, and both are contrasted with Democritus. In the following paragraph at 107 (πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ κριτήριον κτλ) Diogenes resumes the discussion as interrupted at 105 *fin.*

Let us focus first on some questions regarding the text. Diogenes writes: 'Thus, that-which-appears is a criterion according to the Sceptics, as Aenesidemus also says' (ἔστιν οὖν κριτήριον κατὰ τοὺς σκεπτικούς τὸ φαινόμενον, ὥς καὶ Αἰνεσίδημός φησιν). It is not clear, however, what is implied by φησιν: the whole previous sentence ἔστιν κριτήριον κατὰ τοὺς σκεπτικούς τὸ φαινόμενον, or merely ἔστιν κριτήριον τὸ φαινόμενον? In other words: is Aenesidemus saying that appearances provide a criterion *according to the Sceptics*, or is he claiming for himself that appearances do so? The dilemma may seem a false one: to the extent that Aenesidemus is a Sceptical authority, he speaks on behalf of the Sceptics anyway. However, if one adopts the reading that Aenesidemus is the source of the report on the Sceptics, one will have to attribute the very same role to Epicurus. For ὥς καὶ Αἰνεσίδημός φησιν, οὕτω καὶ Ἐπίκουρος. But this is nonsense. Epicurus is *in propria persona* committed to the view that appearances, that is, sense-reports, are a criterion, and is obviously not a source for the Sceptics. Diogenes' phrasing may be ambivalent, but his point is the following: "thus, that-which-appears is a criterion according to the Sceptics, as Aenesidemus also says that it is a criterion, as does Epicurus", or: "as it is a criterion also for Aenesidemus, as well as for Epicurus". This interpretation squares well with the fact that a καὶ introduces the reference to Aenesidemus ('as A. *also* says), so as to distinguish him from the Sceptics. Before discussing Diogenes' possible motivation for making this distinction, however, also the subsequent part of the report needs to be examined.

After coupling Aenesidemus and Epicurus, Diogenes presents Democritus' contrary view, that "none of the appearances is a criterion" (μηδὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων [κριτήριον]). Next comes the

puzzling clause τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι, which, in view of what precedes it, appears to be either unsound or redundant, depending on whether one takes τὰ δέ to imply the preceding genitive τῶν φαινόμενων (“D. says that none of the appearances is a criterion, *but that some of them are not a criterion*”) or a neuter plural φαινόμενα (“D. says that none of the appearances is a criterion, *and that they are not a criterion*”). The only way to make some sense of the text as given is to read “D. says that none of the appearances is a criterion, *and that they do not exist either*”. This reading, which is the most widespread one, is not impossible, but it is not convincing either. Doxographers usually refrain from elaborate points such as the one which Diogenes is allegedly making here. Moreover, the *variatio* in the use of the verb εἶναι from incomplete, implying κριτήριον, to the complete ‘exist’, which this interpretation presupposes, is too abrupt. As von der Mühl has shown in his 1963 article, the presence of a lacuna at this point in the text is likely: in any other extant version of the *diaphonia* on the criterion, beside Epicurus’ sensualist entry and Democritus’ rationalist one, a third, intermediate, position, attributed to Stoics and Peripatetics, is always found, according to which some appearances are true, others not.²⁴ Thus, in von der Mühl’s view, τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι in Diogenes is the surviving part of the sentence which originally expressed the view of Stoics and Peripatetics.

Even if we take the text as it is, and leave aside any comparison with other occurrences of the *diaphonia*, τὰ δέ [τῶν φαινόμενων] in the last sentence most likely depends on a preceding and missing τὰ μὲν, and is the second term of a correlation involving the εἶναι or μὴ εἶναι of τὰ φαινόμενα.²⁵ Since the surviving τὰ δέ refers to the

²⁴ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.369: τῶν φυσικῶν οἱ μὲν πάντα ἀνηρήκασι τὰ φαινόμενα, ὡς οἱ περὶ Δημόκριτον, οἱ δὲ πάντα ἔθεσαν, ὡς οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον καὶ Πρωταγόραν, οἱ δὲ τινὰ μὲν ἀνείλον τινὰ δὲ ἔθεσαν, ὡς οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς καὶ τοῦ Περιπάτου. *Ibidem* 7.388-389: ἥτοι πᾶσαν ἀληθῆ φαντασίαν λεκτέον εἶναι [...] ἢ πᾶσαν ψευδῆ [...] ἢ τινὰ μὲν ἀληθῆ τινὰ δὲ ψευδῆ, ὡς οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς καὶ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας, ἐτι δὲ τοῦ Περιπάτου. 8.184-185: ὁ μὲν Δημόκριτος μὴδὲν ὑποκεῖσθαι φησι τῶν αἰσθητῶν [...] ὁ δὲ Ἐπίκουρος πάντα ἔλεγε τὰ αἰσθητὰ τοιαῦτα ὑποκεῖσθαι ὅποια φαίνεται [...] οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς καὶ τοῦ Περιπάτου μέσσην ὁδὸν τεμόντες ἔνια μὲν ὑποκεῖσθαι τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἔλεξαν ὡς ἀληθῆ, ἔνια δὲ μὴ ὑπάρχειν. 8.355: Δημόκριτος μὲν πᾶσαν αἰσθητὴν ὑπαρξιν κεκίνηκεν, Ἐπίκουρος δὲ πᾶν αἰσθητὸν βέβαιον ἔλεξεν εἶναι, ὁ δὲ Στωϊκὸς Ζήνων διαιρέσει ἐχρήσατο.

²⁵ Thus also Reiske (his notes on Diogenes’ text are edited by Diels in his 1889 article), who suggests that the preceding μὴδὲν εἶναι is a corruption of τὰ μὲν εἶναι (“Democritus says that *some* appearances are the criterion, others not”). But this would misrepresent Democritus’ view as it always appears in Sextus’ comparable *diaphoniai*. Kühn’s conjecture, the only one which is given in the apparatus of the Oxford edition: “post εἶναι <ἔξω> vel <πλήν>“ (= “Democritus says

appearances that ‘are not’ (μὴ εἶναι), the lost τὰ μὲν will, by contrast, refer to the appearances that ‘are’, and hence be the subject of a lost εἶναι. Thus: <τὰ μὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων> τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι. The loss of the first term of the correlation may easily be accounted for as a haplography.

Finally, we need to insert the subject of the sentence, that is, the name of the proponent of this third position. As the parallels in Sextus show, this position belongs to Stoics and Peripatetics. Von der Mühll therefore advances the conjecture: <οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς στοᾶς καὶ τοῦ περιπάτου τὰ μὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων> τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι. However, a less conspicuous pronoun, such as ἄλλοι δέ, would, perhaps, more easily explain why a copist dropped it (an explicit reference to Stoics and Peripatetics would have been less likely to escape his attention). Thus Δημόκριτος δὲ μὴδὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων, <ἄλλοι δὲ τὰ μὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων> τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι: “Democritus says that no appearance is a criterion, <others (say) that some appearances are [a criterion]> while others are not”.

Unfortunately, Von der Mühll was concerned only with establishing the correct reading of the report on Democritus, and left aside any further discussion of the passage. However, once the correct text is established, a few remarks need to be made.

The disagreement between Epicurus and Democritus as to whether or not to yield to appearances is not an idiosyncratic interpretation by Diogenes, but a doxographical *topos* which is widely attested in Sextus: Epicurus takes appearances (that is, sense-reports) always to correspond to an external state of affairs, Democritus believes that they never do, Stoics and Peripatetics take them in some cases to correspond to an external object, in others not. The same *diaphonia* is elsewhere formulated in slightly different terms: Epicurus takes sense-reports always to be true, Democritus takes them always to be false, Stoics and Peripatetics hold that the truth proceeds from sense-reports assessed by reason, that is, rationally discriminated.²⁶

Thus, the actual object of the *diaphonia* at 106 is the criterion of *truth*, an issue on which the Sceptics notoriously suspend judgement. Diogenes himself at 94 reports that “they dismiss the criterion”. As to the limits within which the Sceptics admit appearances, Diogenes writes: “we admit that-which-appears, but we do not know whether it

that nothing is a criterion *but* appearances, and that they [appearances] are not a criterion either”), is implausible.

²⁶ See above n. 24.

is indeed as it appears” (104), and, below (107), “we admit that-which-appears, in as much as it appears”. This is a crucial feature of the Sceptics’ phenomenism, which distances them from those who grant unqualified trust to sense-reports, thus adopting a dogmatic position, as Epicurus did. The gap between Epicurean sensualism and Sceptical phenomenism is so big that this latter is sometimes associated with Democritus’ opposite view that no appearance whatsoever is true.²⁷ And it is from Democritus that the Sceptics borrow the formula οὐ μᾶλλον, by which they express the untrustworthiness of sense-reports: any object is *no more* of one description *than* of another.²⁸

If so, one may wonder why Diogenes, who does have some knowledge of Sceptical doctrine, couples Aenesidemus with Epicurus. Diogenes is usually credited with an unlimited naivety, but this is not fair to him here. He certainly deserves to be charged with misplacing the material that he excerpts from his sources, since he pastes the *diaphonia* on the criterion of truth into an account of the Sceptics’ criterion of life. However, with regard to Aenesidemus’ inclusion in the *diaphonia* and his coupling with Epicurus, Diogenes is merely copying what he finds in his sources. For the very same coupling, again within a *diaphonia* on the criterion of truth, occurs in Sextus too, except that it does not concern Aenesidemus the Sceptic, but Aenesidemus καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον (*M.* 8.4-10):

Of those who have inquired concerning truth, some say that there is not, others that there is something true; and of the latter some have said that only thought-objects are true, others that only sense-objects are, and others that both sense- and thought-objects alike are true [...] Plato and Democritus supposed that only thought-objects are true [...] Aenesidemus καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον and Epicurus both alike fell back on sense-objects [...] The Stoics assert that some thought-objects and some sense-objects are true.²⁹

²⁷ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.213; [Gal.] *Hist. philos.* 7 (= Pyrrho T. 27 DC); Anonym. *In Theaet.* 62.18-63 1.

²⁸ Diog. L. 9.75-76; Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.213.

²⁹ Τῶν γὰρ σκεψαμένων περὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς οἱ μὲν οὐδὲν εἶναι φασιν ἀληθές οἱ δὲ εἶναι, καὶ τῶν εἶναι φαινομένων οἱ μὲν μόνον ἔλεξαν ἀληθὴ εἶναι τὰ νοητά, οἱ δὲ μόνον τὰ αἰσθητά, οἱ δὲ κοινῶς τὰ αἰσθητά τε καὶ νοητά [...] οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Πλάτωνα καὶ Δημόκριτον μόνον τὰ νοητά ὑπενόησαν ἀληθὴ εἶναι [...] οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Αἰνισίδημον καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον καὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσθητά κοινῶς κατενεχθέντες [...] οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς λέγουσι μὲν τῶν τε αἰσθητῶν τινὰ καὶ τῶν νοητῶν ἀληθῆ. Diogenes’ ‘appearances’ (φαινόμενα) at 9.106 are the same thing as Sextus’ sense-reports (αἰσθητά). To my best knowledge, Bächli (1990), p. 43 is the only one who has noticed the parallelism between Diog. L. 9.106 and Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8. However, he fails to investigate the issue.

Diogenes does not have a formula available to indicate which one of the two criteria, whether of truth or of life, is under review. Thus, since earlier doxographers had both Aenesidemus and Epicurus claim that appearances provide a criterion, he has innocently taken this information as appropriate in his short account of the Sceptical criterion of life at 105-106. The name of Aenesidemus, an authority of the school, must in his eyes have guaranteed the correctness of this action.

Evidence that Diogenes has transferred here material which was originally at home elsewhere lies also in the syntactical peculiarity at 106 which I have discussed above: “Thus, that-which-appears is a criterion [of life] according to the Sceptics, as Aenesidemus also says [that that-which-appears is a criterion], and Epicurus as well; Democritus says instead...”. From a syntactical point there is no gap between the first sentence: ἔστιν οὖν κριτήριον κατὰ τοὺς σκεπτικούς τὸ φαινόμενον and the beginning of the *diaphonia*: ὥς καὶ Αἰνεσίδημός φησιν, to the extent that the latter owes the implied clause “that that-which-appears is a criterion” to the former. Yet the former sentence also contains the specification “according to the Sceptics”, which should in principle be understood as implied in the latter sentence, thus giving the nonsensical: “as Aenesidemus also says [that, according to the Sceptics, that-which-appears is a criterion of life], and Epicurus as well”, whereas Sextus *M.* 8.8 makes it clear that the *diaphonia* concerns the criterion of truth, and covers Aenesidemus as a Heraclitean follower (or interpreter), not as a Sceptical authority.

If Diogenes’ coupling of Aenesidemus with Epicurus has well-established doxographical antecedents, one may wonder in what terms the *diaphonia* has come down to him, causing him wrongly to assume that the reference is to the criterion of life instead. To answer this question, one has to consider the pattern of the two comparable *diaphoniai* at Diogenes 9.106 and Sextus *M.* 8.4-10. Diogenes focuses on the topic of whether or not appearances are trustworthy, and his rendering of the *diaphonia* has the following structure:

Theses on the status of appearances	Proponents of the theses
criterion	Aenesidemus and Epicurus
non-criterion	Democritus
<some are criterion> others not	<others>

The comparable *diaphonia* at Sextus *M.* 8.4-10, which includes Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, differs in that it covers all options for the criterion:

Theses on the criterion	Proponents of the theses	Qualifications
τὰ νοητά only	Democritus	No sense-quality is by nature
	Plato	Sense-objects are in flux
τὰ αἰσθητά only	Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον	That-which-appears-to-us-all
	Epicurus	All sense-reports alike
τινὰ of both classes	The Stoics	

If according to Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον appearances are sometimes true, but not always so, his position would fit better into Diogenes' third entry, that of the ἄλλοι, according to whom <τὰ μὲν εἶναι τῶν φαινομένων [κριτήριον]> τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι, rather than that of Epicurus, who admits all sense-reports alike. The reason why Aenesidemus is nevertheless coupled with Epicurus also in Diogenes lies in the process of reduction to its lowest terms that the original *diaphonia* has undergone while being transmitted from one source to the next. In the course of this process the original arrangement is preserved, despite the fact that, once the formulation is modified, this no longer makes sense. And it is easy to guess what has happened in the case of the *diaphonia* on truth: any internal subdivision within each entry, both the subdivision between Epicurus and Aenesidemus, and that between Democritus and Plato, must soon have been dropped in the transmission of the *diaphonia*, thus giving a basic structure such as the following:

Criteria	Proponents of the theses	Qualifications
τὰ νοητά only	- Democritus and Plato	-
τὰ αἰσθητά only	- Aenesidemus and Epicurus	-
some of both classes	- Stoics (and Peripatetics)	-

From this comes Diogenes' own formulation, which receives its point from the identification between Epicurus' sense-reports and Aenesidemus' appearances:

Criteria	Proponents of the theses
τὰ νοητά only -> μηδὲν τῶν φαινομένων	- Democritus
τὰ αἰσθητά only -> τὰ φαινόμενα	- Aenesidemus and Epicurus
τὰ μὲν τῶν φαινομένων εἶναι τὰ δὲ μὴ εἶναι	- <others>

However, beside any doxographical consideration, there is also a theoretical reason why Aenesidemus *must* belong to the same entry as Epicurus in any version of the *diaphonia*: Stoics and Peripatetics not only maintain that *some*, and yet not *all*, appearances are true, but also ascribe the job of discriminating between them to intellect. For, what they suggest is a knowledge of the sensible world by means of reasoning, in terms of 'assent' or the like. Elsewhere Sextus describe the Stoic criterion as a 'mixed' one.³⁰ Aenesidemus' own criterion, by contrast, rests upon purely sensualistic considerations, as Sextus makes clear by counting him among the upholders of the claim that only sense-reports are true (μόνα [...] ἀληθῆ εἶναι τὰ αἰσθητά). I shall return to the question later.

1.2 *Diogenes' Account of Scepticism*

Admittedly, the new text available on Aenesidemus' criterion καθ' Ἡράκλειτον at Diogenes 9.106 does not significantly improve our knowledge of it, since Diogenes merely restates, and reduces to its lowest terms, what we already know from Sextus. However, the Diogenes passage enables us to frame the question of Aenesidemus' alleged Heracliteanism in source-critical terms.

The section of Diogenes' *Lives* devoted to Scepticism consists of two parts: an older, biographical one, concerning Pyrrho and Timon only (61-69 *init.* and 109-116, respectively); and a more recent, properly doxographical one, devoted to Sceptical doctrine as it developed during the Imperial period (69 *fin.*-108). Diogenes' account has been arranged in its current form at least one generation after

³⁰ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.388.

Sextus, since the most recent figure mentioned there is Saturninus Kythênas, an otherwise unknown pupil of his (108). Possibly this is also the time at which Diogenes is to be placed,³¹ or at least it provides a *terminum post quem* for his dating.

The material included in the biographical section goes back to the Hellenistic period.³² That included in the doxographical section, by contrast, dates to a time when Sceptical doctrine has already reached a well-established shape, comparable to that it has in Sextus. However, this cannot be very late, since, when a bibliography for (as it were) advanced learners is given at 102, the most recent author named is Aenesidemus, and this suggests that whoever originally drew up the list was not acquainted with later Sceptical authorities, such as Favorinus, Menodotus and Sextus (to mention the most eminent ones). I shall now turn to a closer examination of 102, in view of its importance for identifying Diogenes' sources.

After setting out the Sceptical tenets (70b-101), and before turning to the dogmatists' criticisms and the Sceptics' reply to them (102 *init.*-108), Diogenes addresses his readers directly, and writes (102 *init.*):

It is possible to learn also the full way in which their system develops directly from the treatises which they have left. Pyrrho himself did not leave any written work. However, those who were acquainted with him did: Timon, Aenesidemus, Numenius, Nausiphanes and others like them.³³

The list of sources on Pyrrho has been brought into question, to the extent of being considered, I believe mistakenly, a late gloss on the text. The term συνήθης ('pupil', 'friend', 'fellow' of Pyrrho) referred to Aenesidemus may be disturbing, but the train of thought is consistent: *there are treatises composed by actual members of Pyrrho's school, which offer a full account of its doctrine, and which can be consulted directly: Pyrrho himself did not leave any written work, but those who were acquainted with him did so.* Next comes the list of sources on Pyrrho, both those who were personally acquainted with him (Timon, Numenius,

³¹ The nickname ὁ κυθηνᾶς has no apparent meaning, and Brochard (1887), p. 327 n. 1 may be right in emending it to ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς ("Saturninus who is contemporary with us"). Mansfeld (1986), p. 302 provides additional arguments.

³² Small later insertions influenced by later debates are pointed out and discussed in Declava Caizzi (1992c).

³³ Ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὸν ὅλον τῆς συναγωγῆς αὐτῶν τρόπον συνιδεῖν ἐκ τῶν ἀπολειφθεῖσων συντάξεων. αὐτὸς μὲν γὰρ ὁ Πύρρων οὐδὲν ἀπέλιπεν, οἱ μὲντοι συνήθεις αὐτοῦ Τίμων καὶ Αἰνεσίδημος καὶ Νουμήνιος καὶ Ναυσίφάνης καὶ ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι.

Nausiphanes), and those who were not (only Aenesidemus is mentioned). It has been observed that in any other occurrence of the term συνήθης in Diogenes it entails personal acquaintance,³⁴ but this argument is not decisive: Diogenes uses the vocabulary of his sources, which differ from place to place, and therefore a disagreement between the usage of the same term in different contexts may be granted. Even if one were to accept the hypothesis that the term connotes personal acquaintance, one may suppose that the author of the list intended to say: “Already those who were acquainted with Pyrrho left some written works”, that is, not to give the actual list of Pyrrho’s pupils (which Diogenes has already given at 69 within Pyrrho’s biography, and which would be not relevant here), but rather the list of those who left some written works *from* his συνήθεις *downward*. Diogenes’ actual wording may be somewhat imprecise, but the text does make sense.³⁵

Beside the authors expressly named, Diogenes speaks of “others like them”. What should one understand by ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι? Literally to understand: “Others of Pyrrho’s fellows such as the aforementioned” is neither the only, nor the best option available, in view of the fact that the preceding list of Pyrrho’s συνήθεις does not only cover those who were personally acquainted with Pyrrho. Therefore, I would rather read the expression ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι as referring to writers of Πυρρώνειοι λόγοι who were authoritative at the time of Diogenes’ source, no matter whether or not they met Pyrrho personally.³⁶

We are not, of course, in a position to identify these unnamed authors with certainty. However, one can reasonably conjecture who they are not, thus fixing a *terminus ante quem* for Diogenes’ source. Had Diogenes’ source given the names of Sceptics who were still authoritative in Diogenes’ own day, such as Sextus, Diogenes himself would have hardly cut them out. More plausible is to think, then, that

³⁴ Barnes (1992), p. 4260 n. 99.

³⁵ The hypothesis that the list of Sceptic authors is a later interpolation, advanced by Hirzel (1883), III p. 44 (arguing that there have never existed a Numenius pupil of Pyrrho), and recently resumed by Barnes (1992), pp. 4260-4263 (who, however, does not commit himself to it), does not take into account that the function of the entire paragraph is precisely that of providing the reader with a list of authors to consult, without which it no longer makes sense. On Pyrrho’s pupils Numenius and Nausiphanes see Decleva Caizzi (1981), pp. 206-207.

³⁶ Hicks’ translation of ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι for the Loeb edition (second vol., p. 513): “others as well [left writings]” does not translate τοιοῦτοι.

ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι are minor authors, such as Zeuxis, Antiochus and the other Sceptics named at 106, whose authority has diminished over time, and whose names Diogenes at 102 may have therefore cut out. These people are early followers of Aenesidemus and/or Agrippa,³⁷ and are datable to the first century AD.

The references to Sextus and other late Sceptics which are found elsewhere in Diogenes do not conflict with this hypothesis, since these references are additions aimed at updating the material he has excerpted from his basic source. At least this is the function of the report at 70 *fin.*-73 that Theodosius (second century AD) did not consent to the name 'Pyrrhonists' adopted by earlier Sceptics. The report on the different arrangement of the tropes in Sextus and Favorinus (late first century) at 87, which breaks the account of the tropes, is again of this kind.

The hypothesis of an early date for Diogenes' source gains support from a subtle point raised by Hirzel, who argues that the οὔτοι ("these people") referred to at 90, to whom the arguments expounded from 90 up to 101 belong, may not be οἱ σκεπτικοί generically, but specifically οἱ περὶ Ἀγρίππαν mentioned at 88-89.³⁸ Developing Hirzel's point, one may hypothesise that Apelles, Agrippa's spokesman (106), is the basic source (though not necessarily the *direct* source) for much of Diogenes' doxography, at least from 88 to 101, and thus one of the ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι mentioned at 102. Nothing of my argument, however, turns upon this identification.

Diogenes knows Sextus, perhaps even reads him,³⁹ but does not draw on him in any part of his account of Scepticism, either directly or indirectly.⁴⁰ One of the reasons is easy to guess: Diogenes' account is incomparably shorter than Sextus', and a source of smaller dimensions, even if less authoritative, was presumably more appealing to him. But there is also, I believe, a reason intrinsic to the different nature and purpose of Diogenes' and Sextus' works. Sextus expounds the Sceptical system of his day. Historical issues are rare, and brought

³⁷ For Zeuxis and Antiochus see Diog. L. 9.116.

³⁸ Barnes (1983b), p. 188 n. 8 considers Hirzel's hypothesis to be "by any means uncertain", but does not bring any reason in support of his doubts.

³⁹ At least his "ten Sceptical books" (perhaps to be identified with the work currently known as *Against the Mathematicians* or a part of it), described as 'excellent' at 116. But this might be a stereotyped comment, not revealing any actual reading of them.

⁴⁰ This is the unanimous opinion of scholars today; see, in particular, Janáček (1970) and Barnes (1992), p. 4272.

into discussion only in the pursuit of related theoretical questions. Thus, it is no accident if most of our testimonia on Pyrrho, Timon and Aenesidemus are from sources other than Sextus: isolating individual figures and phases of Scepticism would demystify his representation of it as a monolith beyond time. Diogenes' aim is, by contrast, that of drawing a comprehensive picture of the Sceptical *tradition*, the most comprehensive as possible within the limits of an outline account. And he could get this only from sources that collected and preserved material of various inspiration and origin.⁴¹ The different focus between Diogenes and Sextus explains why the former does not draw on the latter, and also suggests that they should draw on sources which differ not only quantitatively (in their presumably different length), but also qualitatively (in their different content and historiographical attitude).

If this is the case, the repetition of some material between Diogenes and Sextus, often even in identical wording, is no evidence for their joint dependence directly on the same source. By contrast, it reveals that the formulation of at least some Sceptical tenets had been so rigidly crystallised already by an early stage of the tradition, as to occur identically even in largely independent authors. This consideration also applies to their report on Aenesidemus' criterion καθ' Ἡράκλειτον.

1.3 *Sceptical Literature*

Sextus is aware that the context in which Aenesidemus put forward his criterion of truth based on universally agreed appearances ('that-which-appears-to-us-all') is not an account of Sceptical doctrine, so much so that he inserts the clause καθ' Ἡράκλειτον. For Sextus knows of some 'Heraclitean' inclination on Aenesidemus' part, and at *PH* 1.210-212 he goes so far as to denounce it as a deviation from genuine Scepticism. Diogenes' sources, by contrast, did not communicate

⁴¹ A telling instance of the different attitudes with which Sextus and Diogenes select and arrange their material comes from the way in which they present the Sceptics' criterion of life. Sextus gives it as if it had been, once and for all, already present from the beginning. Diogenes, on the contrary, presents it as a later reformulation of the original doctrine, subsequent to the dogmatists' objections, and also gives some bibliographical references and items of information such as that regarding Zeuxis' status as a pupil of Aenesidemus. In so doing, Diogenes expresses, more or less accurately, a logical and historical coming-to-be of Scepticism, which is absent from Sextus.

to him the existence of any substantial gap between Aenesidemus' Scepticism and his Heracliteanism, letting him conflate the two. Thus, although Diogenes at 106 preserves one report on Aenesidemus καὶ Ἡράκλειτον, he fails to understand the reference, and he (mis)reads it in the light of Scepticism. Had Diogenes' sources suggested to him the suspicion of any ambiguity whatsoever in Aenesidemus' thought, he could not have helped mentioning it. One must bear in mind that Diogenes collects all sorts of biographical and doxographical curiosities, and such a piece of information would have suited him down to the ground, as his report that, according to Numenius, Pyrrho "dogmatised" (9.68), and his other report, that Theodosius refuses to be named after Pyrrho (9.70-1), show. On the contrary, we do not find anything of this kind referred to Aenesidemus within the mass of curiosities which Diogenes was able to collect. Since Diogenes' sources are less extensive and detailed than Sextus, but also more concerned with giving information of 'journalistic' import, one might infer that neither Diogenes, nor his sources before him were acquainted with rumours concerning Aenesidemus. This suggests that Sceptical literature for beginners, already at an early stage in the tradition, no longer transmitted material relevant to Aenesidemus καὶ Ἡράκλειτον, except for those items which lent themselves to being (mis)understood in the light of mainstream Scepticism, such as his criterion that only universally agreed appearances are true.

There are two explanations for this. The first is that there was indeed a Heraclitean heresy on Aenesidemus' part, and that the censorship that later Sceptics applied to it was so quick and firm that the relevant material went lost in transmission. On this view, we would be dealing with a *damnatio memoriae* of Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism. The second explanation is that no-one of those who could still read Aenesidemus directly understood his 'Heraclitean' doctrines as items of a philosophical system conflicting with Scepticism, and thus meriting express notice while presenting Aenesidemus' thought. On this view, the material καὶ Ἡράκλειτον was gradually lost in transmission, simply because it did not prove of interest to later Sceptics. It is the latter hypothesis, as I shall argue, which enables us to explain the different approaches, or even lack of approach, of later sources to Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' material, and eventually directs us towards a satisfactory account of the nature of his 'Heracliteanism'.

Aristocles (first century AD?),⁴² an opponent of Scepticism who is acquainted with both Timon and Aenesidemus,⁴³ does not mention any Heraclitean, dogmatic inclination. Had there been the possibility of using such evidence against the Sceptics, he would hardly have missed it. For Aristocles' argument against Scepticism is centred on inconsistencies in it. Therefore, however little knowledge of Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism may have been available to Aristocles, he would hardly have passed the matter over in silence, had there been an acknowledged or acknowledgeable incompatibility with Sceptical doctrine.

Photius read only the *Pyrrhonist Discourses*, of which he composes a résumé. The lack of references to Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον in Photius may be due to the absence of Heraclitean material in the work that Photius epitomises. For a passage in Sextus suggests that Aenesidemus had devoted a specific work to Heraclitus, entitled Πρώτη εἰσαγωγή <εἰς τὴν φιλοσοφίαν τοῦ Ἡρακλείτου>.⁴⁴ The early loss of this work would explain why none of our sources on Aenesidemus and Heraclitus has first-hand material available, and all of them give the same reports arranged into the same *diaphoniai*.⁴⁵ One may suppose that, once Aenesidemus' original work had disappeared, or at least was no longer read, there remained a unique doxographical archetype on which all our sources ultimately drew.

Sextus, by contrast, does preserve some of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' material, differentiating it from the Sceptical one by adding the formula καθ' Ἡράκλειτον to the name of Aenesidemus. The mere

⁴² On Aristocles' dating and work see Chiesara (2001), pp. xiii-xxxviii.

⁴³ Aristocles at Eus. *PE* 14.18.29 speaks of 'a certain Aenesidemus' (Αἰνισίδημός τις). Natorp (1884), p. 73 concludes from this that "Aristokles kennt den Aenesidem kaum". According to Chiesara (2001), p. xviii and pp. 134-136, the expression does not imply that Aristocles himself has little knowledge of Aenesidemus, but rather that Aenesidemus is still unknown in Aristocles' day. Neither Natorp nor Chiesara considers the possibility that the expression has derogatory purposes. The work of Aenesidemus with which Aristocles is acquainted is the *Outline of Pyrrhonism*. It is hard to tell if he also knew other works of Aenesidemus. The *Pyrrhonist Discourses* are perhaps referred to at 14.18.16 by αἱ μακρὰι στοιχειώσεις Αἰνισιδήμου καὶ πᾶς ὁ τοιοῦτος ὄχλος τῶν λόγων.

⁴⁴ See ch. I.4.

⁴⁵ These are the parallels: Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8 = Diog. L. 9.106; Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.349 = Tert. *De an.* 10; Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.350 = *De an.* 14. Tertullian lies outside the scope of our discussion here, as he does not know, or anyway does not discuss, Aenesidemus as a Sceptic philosopher, but only reports his doctrines on the soul καθ' Ἡράκλειτον. This suggests that the doxographical tradition on Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον followed its own path outside Sceptical literature, and aside from any reference to Scepticism.

fact that reports on Aenesidemus and Heraclitus are normally parts of *diaphonia* schemes might have been taken to suggest that we are dealing with dogmatic theories. However, this argument is by no means decisive: the inclusion of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines in *diaphoniai* merely purports to fit them into doxographical schemes. One must bear in mind that Diogenes' source at 9.106 is reporting the same *diaphonia* as Sextus does at *M.* 8.8, and yet he does not understand, nor communicate to Diogenes its reader, the existence of any dogmatic streak.

What does license this suspicion is, rather, the fact that Sextus in a well-known passage at *PH* 1.210-212 denounces the inconsistency between Aenesidemus' fondness for Heraclitus and Scepticism. Some commentators have regarded this report as evidence for a separate and conflicting phase within Aenesidemus' thought. Others have contended that Sextus' problem is not the inconsistency between Scepticism and 'Heracliteanism' within Aenesidemus' thought, but rather that between Aenesidemus' claim of a privileged link with Heraclitus and what Sextus conceives of as genuine Scepticism. But this, obviously enough, only expresses Sextus' attitude, and need not correspond to other Sceptics' understanding of the matter, let alone Aenesidemus' own intention. But what exactly was Aenesidemus' intention then? What does his claim concerning Scepticism and Heraclitus amount to?

I.4 *The Path (Sext. Emp. PH 1.210)*

The claim which is attributed to Aenesidemus, and which Sextus challenges, at *PH* 1.210-212, is that: "Scepticism is a path (ὁδός) towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, since the idea that external objects display opposite appearances precedes the idea that external objects have opposite properties (προηγείται τοῦ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπάρχειν τὸ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φαίνεσθαι, καὶ οἱ μὲν σκεπτικοὶ φαίνεσθαι λέγουσι τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτό)". The crucial question concerns exactly what relationship Aenesidemus intended to establish between Scepticism and Heracliteanism by means of the path metaphor. Unfortunately, the speculative way in which this question has usually been addressed has so far frustrated hopes of an agreed interpretation. My contention is that a closer examination of other occurrences of this metaphor in ancient literature may give us a clue as to its meaning in the case of Aenesidemus as well.

The standard usage of the path metaphor, in ancient Greek as well as in modern languages, is that, if *x* is a path towards *y*, *x* is only a preparation for, a preliminary stage to, *y*, and hence that *y* is higher in value. This is the case with statements such as “virtue is a path towards happiness”, found in Philo of Alexandria (e.g. *De spec. leg.* 4.69). If Aenesidemus’ usage of the path metaphor is of this kind, one should think that he thereby intends to privilege Heracliteanism over Scepticism, and this would certainly licence the suspicion that, when making Scepticism a path towards Heracliteanism, Aenesidemus is no longer, or not yet, a Sceptic.

Therefore, all those commentators who refrain from postulating the existence of a separate phase in Aenesidemus’ thought are at odds with what looks like the most obvious meaning of Sextus’ phrasing. Diels hypothesises that Sextus had only indirect access to Aenesidemus, and that he misunderstood the point, making up the story of the path. Others have tried to reconcile Aenesidemus’ definition of Scepticism with a non-developmental account, contending that making it a path towards Heracliteanism does not entail that, in Aenesidemus’ view, the Sceptics ought to become Heracliteans, or that Aenesidemus himself took this step. It only establishes a logical relationship between the two philosophies. In this way, Aenesidemus might have hoped to appropriate the legacy of Heraclitus, either in order to claim allegiance to Scepticising aspects of Heraclitus (von Arnim) or in order to refute the Stoics (Burkhard).

It is, I believe, right to say that Aenesidemus’ usage of the path metaphor does not presuppose commitment to Heracliteanism. But the point can be perhaps argued for on different, and safer, grounds than it has been. While the standard usage of the path metaphor entails privileging the point of arrival over the intermediate term, there is at least one occurrence of the metaphor which provides a closer parallel to our text, and also throws light on the meaning. This occurrence is found in Ammonius’ commentary on Porphyry’s *Introduction* to Aristotle’s *Categories*:

Porphyry had entitled his writing ‘Introduction’, since it is a path towards the whole of philosophy. For the *Categories* precedes all philosophical writings, and the *Introduction*, in turn, precedes the *Categories*.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Ἐπύραψε δὲ [ὁ Πορφύριος] τὸ βιβλίον ‘εἰσαγωγὴν’, ἐπειδὴ ὁδὸς ἐστὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν φιλοσοφίαν· προηγούνται γὰρ τῶν φιλοσόφων πάντων συγγραμμάτων αἱ κατηγορίαι, τούτων δὲ ἡ εἰσαγωγή.

In Ammonius, the thing to which Porphyry's *Introduction* is a path is the whole of philosophy (πᾶσα φιλοσοφία). What follows in the text, however, reveals that the immediate thing to which Porphyry's *Introduction* is a path is Aristotle's *Categories*, that is, the text which Porphyry is introducing. Ammonius takes it for granted that readers would immediately understand the reference. His concern is, rather, to justify why Porphyry's *Introduction*, being a path towards Aristotle's *Categories*, is also a path towards the whole of philosophy. This suggests that the usage of the path metaphor as describing the relationship between an isagogic work to a text and the text itself was a relatively well-established one.

It is precisely this usage of the path metaphor that makes, I believe, the Ammonius passage relevant to Aenesidemus. We do not know exactly which work of Aenesidemus incorporated his Heraclitean material. One may infer *ex silentio* that neither his *Pyrrhonist Discourses* epitomised by Photius nor his *Outline of the Philosophy of Pyrrho* used by Aristocles did so, since neither of these authors are acquainted with the Heraclitean material. Presumably there was a specific work of Aenesidemus, other than his most celebrated writings, in which he discussed Heraclitus. A passage at Sext. Emp. *M.* 10.216 appears to confirm the hypothesis, and also to tell us the title of this work:

Aenesidemus stated that, according to Heraclitus, time is a body (σῶμα μὲν οὖν εἶναι τὸν χρόνον Αἰνησίδημος κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον ἔλεξεν)⁴⁷, in that it does not differ from the existent and the first body. Hence, when he mentions in the *First Introduction* (διὰ τῆς πρώτης εἰσαγωγῆς) that the simple appellations, which are the parts of speech, apply to six things, he asserts that the nouns 'time' and 'unit' are applied to the substance, which is corporeal.⁴⁸

Interpreting πρώτη εἰσαγωγή as the title of Aenesidemus' Heraclitean work is only conjectural. The expression could in principle indicate the very beginning of one unnamed work of his.⁴⁹ However, the

⁴⁷ It is impossible to translate the expression ἔλεξεν... Αἰνησίδημος κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον without solving the ambiguity of the Greek, which raises one of the most puzzling problems concerning Aenesidemus and Heraclitus. I adopt the translation which I believe is the correct one, but I am aware that, at this stage of my discussion, this translation looks like begging the question (the proposed translation is argued for below ch. IV.1). Nothing of my current argument, however, turns upon adopting it.

⁴⁸ The text is quoted in its full length, and commented on, in appendix one.

⁴⁹ The use of the preposition διὰ (lit.: 'in the course of'), instead of ἐν, might be taken to reinforce this hypothesis. Natorp (1884), p. 124 n. 1., however, provides

adjective ‘first’ qualifying ‘introduction’ evinces a precision that does not fit well this interpretation. It is unlikely that Sextus takes the trouble to tell us from what part of a book the quotation comes, and yet that he forgets to tell us what book is in question.⁵⁰ It makes better sense to think that Sextus is giving us this latter information instead. As to the meaning of the adjective ‘first’, it presumably conveys the idea of a basic account of the matter under review, likewise Chrysippus’ lost *First Introduction to Syllogisms*.⁵¹ The formula καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον which Sextus supplies next to Aenesidemus’ name makes it obvious that the matter under review is Heraclitus’ philosophy. Therefore, one may tentatively suggest that the complete title was Πρώτη εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὴν φιλοσοφίαν τοῦ Ἡρακλείτου, or something like that.⁵²

If I am right in thinking that πρώτη εἰσαγωγή is the title of Aenesidemus’ ‘Heraclitean’ work, there is something which should make us stop and pause: we know from Ammonius that an introductory work can be presented as a ‘path’ towards the understanding of the text it introduces. As it happens, the work of Aenesidemus too, where he made Scepticism a ‘path’ towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, is an *Introduction*, one may assume, to Heraclitus. The agreement between Aenesidemus and Ammonius in adopting the path metaphor in a context in which an isagogic work is referred to is, I believe, remarkable. True, in Aenesidemus it is Scepticism itself, and not his *Introduction* to Heraclitus, that is presented as a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus. One may suppose that the image of the path in Aenesidemus refers primarily to his own introductory work, and then, by extension, to Scepticism itself, the philosophy to which he was committed, and which provided him with a tool for introducing Heraclitus. What I have in mind is the rhetorical figure by which

textual evidence to the effect that the preposition διὰ + genitive may well be followed by the title of a book.

⁵⁰ In all occurrences of the expression indicating the very beginning of a book (e.g., Basilus *De spir. sanct.* 10.26) it is always clear what book is in question.

⁵¹ This work of Chrysippus is mentioned by Sext. Emp. at *M.* 8.223.

⁵² Sextus presumably omitted part of the title because he thought that the reference to Αἰνησίδημος κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον made it obvious to readers. Natorp (1884), pp. 123-124 refrains from identifying Aenesidemus’ Heraclitean work with the πρώτη εἰσαγωγή, on the grounds that this title suggests an introduction to logic. However, although Stoics of the Hellenistic era appear to use εἰσαγωγή in this sense, there are later instances of εἰσαγωγήι specifically concerned with introducing philosophers; such as Alcinous’ *Didaskalikos*, which is described at 189, 28-29 as an introduction to Plato’s δόγματα. Moreover, the report in which the πρώτη εἰσαγωγή is mentioned is expressly referred to Aenesidemus κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον.

the abstract stands for the concrete (metonymy), that is, in this case, Scepticism stands for Aenesidemus' *Introduction*.

On this account, making Scepticism a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus did not commit Aenesidemus to any claim concerning the logical or philosophical relationship between the two philosophies. It merely expresses the idea that Scepticism provides a suitable tool for interpreting Heraclitus, in the same way as Porphyry's *Introduction* does for Aristotle's logic. True, Porphyry is not only introducing Aristotle's logic, he is also committed to it. However, it is not Porphyry's commitment or otherwise to Aristotle's logic that the path metaphor purports to express, but merely his isagogic skills, and my proposed parallelism is not between Porphyry's and Aenesidemus' overall attitudes towards the texts they introduce, but only between their usages of the path metaphor.

But why does Scepticism, in Aenesidemus' view, provide a key to access Heraclitus? Because the Sceptic principle, that external objects display opposite properties, 'precedes' (προηγείται) Heraclitus' own principle, that external objects have opposite properties, Aenesidemus goes on. The reference is to the leit-motifs of Scepticism and Heracliteanism. But in what sense does the one 'precede' the other? Von Arnim and Burkhard have understood this verb as referring to logical priority: the Sceptic principle 'is anterior to' the Heraclitean one, and therefore Heracliteanism entails Scepticism, but not *vice versa*.⁵³

As it happens, Ammonius too uses the verb προηγείσθαι to explain in what sense Porphyry's *Introduction* is a path towards the whole of philosophy: "because Aristotle's *Categories* precede all philosophical works, and Porphyry's *Introduction*, in turn, precedes the *Categories* (προηγούνται τῶν φιλοσόφων πάντων συγγραμμάτων αἱ κατηγορίαι, τούτων δὲ ἡ εἰσαγωγή)". Ammonius' point is that knowledge of the *Categories* is required for understanding any philosophical statement, and knowledge of Porphyry's *Introduction*, in turn, is required for understanding the *Categories*. Maybe logical priority is in the picture, but the primary reference of Ammonius' προηγείσθαι is to the conditions which makes it possible for readers to understand a *book*, so much so that he rewords the "whole of philosophy" (πᾶσα φιλοσοφία) to which he previously referred in terms of "all philosophical books" (τὰ φιλοσόφα πάντα συγγράμματα).

⁵³ Von Arnim (1888), pp. 79-85; Burkhard (1973), pp. 34-47. The same interpretation is in Bett (2000), pp. 224-226.

Sextus' phrasing, that the Sceptic principle, i.e. that external objects display opposite properties, 'precedes' the Heraclitean one, i.e. that external objects have opposite properties, presents, by contrast, a dilemma: does Aenesidemus mean to say that to endorse the Sceptic principle is a condition for *endorsing* the Heraclitean one (this is Von Arnim's and Burkhard's interpretation); or does Aenesidemus mean to say that to endorse the Sceptic principle is a condition for *understanding* the Heraclitean one, and hence Heraclitus' book as a whole? If the Ammonius parallel holds, the correct interpretation is the latter, and the idea is that one has to be a Sceptic in order to understand, and to explain to others, Heraclitus. Along these lines, Aenesidemus' additional remark, that "while the Sceptics say that the same thing displays opposite properties, the Heracliteans go on from this to assert that it has opposite properties", makes the point that the Sceptic principle is merely explicative of the Heraclitean one, which, as such, goes beyond what the Sceptics are willing to admit.

As it happens, Sextus himself at 212 goes on to reveal that the whole story is about understanding Heraclitus:

In reply to him [Aenesidemus] we say that [...] it is the case, rather, that Scepticism, far from being an aid to the understanding of the philosophy of Heraclitus (συνεργεῖ πρὸς τὴν γνῶσιν τῆς Ἡρακλειτείου φιλοσοφίας), is actually an obstacle thereto.

In so doing Sextus confirms that the question of the logical priority of Scepticism over Heracliteanism is not the issue. If logical priority is in the picture, it is only subsidiary to the claim that Scepticism provides a tool for understanding Heraclitus.

Once the precise meaning of Aenesidemus' claim concerning the relationship between Scepticism and Heracliteanism has been established, we are now in a position to recover his motivation. Mentioning the qualities required of the exegete, which make him a suitable interpreter of the text he is going to discuss, is one of the standard elements of the 'isagogic' scheme.⁵⁴ Along these lines, one may suppose that Aenesidemus' point in putting forward his strange definition of Scepticism was to claim the task of interpreting Heraclitus for the Sceptics, and hence for himself.

But why should a Sceptic set out to explain Heraclitus? Here several answers, compatible with each other, are available. First of all, making sense of what Heraclitus said was one of the major challenges

⁵⁴ Mansfeld (1994), p. 13.

for both philosophers and grammarians in antiquity.⁵⁵ And at a time when all philosophical schools were looking backward, and claiming the legacy of the 'Ancients', Aenesidemus might have regarded providing a Sceptical interpretation of Heraclitus as a way of enhancing the appeal of his newly founded school. It is possible that in doing so he also intended to challenge pre-existing, and competing, interpretations of Heraclitus, primarily, though probably not exclusively,⁵⁶ the Stoic one. However, hypothesising that Aenesidemus' interpretation as a whole amounted to a grand *reductio ad absurdum* of Stoicism, as Burkhard does, seems to me to go too far. As a matter of fact, if Aenesidemus identified Heraclitus as a philosopher who lends himself to Sceptical interpretation, it is likely that he detected at least some Sceptical hints in Heraclitus' philosophy, starting from the principle of conflicting appearances and the other ideas which are incorporated into his 'Heraclitean' material.

Aenesidemus' undertaking may recall other instances of Sceptical interpretations of the Presocratics. Pyrrho, when complaining about the vanity of human thoughts, used to refer to Democritus.⁵⁷ Timon allowed the existence of some similarity between Pyrrho's and Xenophanes' views.⁵⁸ Arcesilaus, and the Academics after him, used to claim that the majority of earlier philosophers professed doubts concerning our cognitive access to things.⁵⁹ Theodosius too, a Sceptic of the second century AD, invoked the authority of ancient philosophers and even poets.⁶⁰

However, there is a substantial difference between this practice and Aenesidemus' own: neither Pyrrho and Timon nor the Academics or Theodosius undertook elaborate and comprehensive interpretations of the Presocratics. They were happy to pinpoint individual aspects, or even sentences, which admit of Sceptical reading,

⁵⁵ Heraclitus is the only philosopher for whom Diogenes bother listing the exegetes; see Diog. L. 9.15. The problem of interpreting Heraclitus is still alive in the late first century AD, when Plutarch devotes a work *περὶ τοῦ τί ἔδοξεν Ἡρακλείτῳ* to the subject (n. 205 in the Lamprias catalogue).

⁵⁶ Aenesidemus' goal in interpreting Heraclitus may also be that of giving an example of how the Sceptics explain philosophical texts better than the grammarians do (Heraclitus is listed among the authors that the grammarians profess to explain, but fail to do so, at Sext. Emp. M. 1.301).

⁵⁷ Diog. L. 9. 67 = Pyrrho T 20 DC. See also Declava Caizzi (1984).

⁵⁸ Bett (2000), pp. 143-9, provides the relevant references.

⁵⁹ Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1121E - 1122A; Cic. *Ac.* 1.14. For a recent status quaestionis see Brittain-Palmer (2001).

⁶⁰ Diog. Laert. 9.71-73; Suidas s.v. Πυρρώνειοι.

regardless of whether and how these aspects, or sentences, fit in the overall framework of the authors in question. Aenesidemus, by contrast, aimed at providing a comprehensive account of Heraclitus, and there is no evidence, nor reason to think, that he undertook similar tasks for other philosophers. He did not intend to compose a Sceptical history of earlier philosophy: his interest was Heraclitus alone. Why Heraclitus? Maybe it is the fact that, in Aenesidemus' view, he lent himself to Sceptical interpretation better than any other early philosopher, that is, that Heraclitus anticipated, to a lesser or greater extent, ideas which were important for Aenesidemus. I shall advance some hypotheses on these ideas when discussing individual pieces of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus. Before then, however, it may be useful to consider Sextus' criticism of him, and to check against it if my interpretation of Aenesidemus' claim holds. To be sure, the proposed interpretation makes good sense of the silence of all other sources: to set out to explain Heraclitus, whatever goal Aenesidemus had in mind, may well have appeared to later Sceptics a pointless exercise. Sextus is the only one who bothers to mention Aenesidemus' claim concerning Scepticism and Heraclitus, and to challenge it. In what follows I investigate Sextus' arguments.

I.5 *Sextus versus Aenesidemus*

If it is true that Aenesidemus did not intend to make any general claim concerning the nature as such of Scepticism, but merely to justify adopting Scepticism as a tool for understanding Heraclitus, why does Sextus so concern himself? In order to answer this question, I shall give closer examination to Sextus' discussion of Aenesidemus' thesis at *PH* 1.210-212 in its entirety.

Now, that the philosophy of Heraclitus differs from our own system is plain at once. For Heraclitus makes dogmatic statements about many non-evident things, whereas we, as has been said, do not. Nevertheless, Aenesidemus maintained that Scepticism is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, since to hold that opposite properties 'appear' in one and the same object precedes holding that they really 'exist' in it, and while the Sceptics say that one and the same thing displays opposite properties, the Heracliteans go on from this to assert that it has opposite properties. In reply to him [Aenesidemus] we declare that...⁶¹

⁶¹ Ὅτι μὲν οὖν αὕτη διαφέρει τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀγωγῆς, πρόδηλον· ὁ μὲν γὰρ Ἡράκλειτος περὶ πολλῶν ἀδήλων ἀποφαίνεται δογματικῶς, ἡμεῖς δ' οὐχί, καθάπερ

The first sentence suggests that the disagreement between Aenesidemus and Sextus does not involve an overall identity between Heracliteanism and Scepticism: neither went so far as to conflate the two. Then, by saying οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδήμιον ἔλεγον, Sextus lets us understand that, down to φαμὲν πρὸς τούτους, he is reporting Aenesidemus' view. In every case where Sextus is discussing, and refuting, theses which suggest an affinity between the Sceptics and other philosophers in the section devoted to this topic at *PH* 1.210-241 (in order: Democritus; the Cyrenaics; Protagoras; the Academy; the Empiricist doctors), he never reveals the identity of the proponents, and always uses the present tense to introduce their theses (λέγεται, φασί τινες, δοκεῖ etc.). The case of Aenesidemus and Heraclitus is the only one in which Sextus names its upholder, and places it in the past (ἔλεγον). This suggests that Sextus wants us to take the report as an accurate one. Nevertheless, not all his words go back to Aenesidemus, who lived in the half of the first century BC, and who is therefore unlikely to have spoken in terms of ἡ σκεπτική ἀγωγή and οἱ σκεπτικοί.⁶² If this is a paraphrase, then we have to assess how much it is likely to express Aenesidemus' own thought, or, alternatively, to have been 'adjusted' by Sextus.

As the parallel at Ammonius suggests, the ultimate reference of the path metaphor in Sextus is Aenesidemus' *First Introduction* to Heraclitus. It is possible that this metaphor has been applied to Scepticism by Sextus. However, following the principle of charity, it may well be the case that Aenesidemus himself had already at least implied that reference, without speaking in terms of "the Sceptical school" (ἡ σκεπτική ἀγωγή), but perhaps of the 'Pyrrhonist line of arguing' (ὁ Πυρρώνειος λόγος), as he does at Diog. Laert. IX 78.

εἴρηται. ἐπεὶ δὲ οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδήμιον ἔλεγον ὁδὸν εἶναι τὴν σκεπτικὴν ἀγωγὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἡρακλείτειον φιλοσοφίαν, διότι προηγείται τοῦ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπάρχειν τὸ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φαίνεσθαι, καὶ οἱ μὲν σκεπτικοὶ φαίνεσθαι λέγουσι τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, οἱ δὲ Ἡρακλείτειοι ἀπὸ τούτου καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ὑπάρχειν αὐτὰ μετέρχονται, φαμὲν πρὸς τούτους κτλ. The expression οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδήμιον is only a periphrase to indicate Aenesidemus, and should not mislead us into thinking that some unknown followers of his are referred to.

⁶² The term σκεπτικός occurs as early as in Philo. However, occurrences in Philo seem to suggest that the term does not have a technical meaning yet in his day (see, for instance, *Leg. All.* 3 238; *Ebr.* 98, 202; *Her.* 279). It is only with Favorinus that it safely connotes a specific group of philosophers, and nobody else. To be sure, the term does not occur in Photius, whom Janáček (1976) argues to be a reliable source for Aenesidemus' terminology. More detailed discussions of the history of the term can be found in Janáček (1979), pp. 65-68; Sedley (1983), p. 20 and p. 27 n. 61; and Tarrant (1985), pp. 22-29; Decleva Caizzi (1992b), pp. 296-297.

Next the explanation comes that Sceptical philosophy is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, because the Sceptical principle, that the same thing displays opposite properties, precedes the Heraclitean one, that the same thing has opposite properties. Although the scope of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus, as it emerges from the body of reports bearing on it, goes beyond the question of conflicting appearances, it is quite possible that the similarity between Heraclitus' and the Sceptics' approaches to the question was indeed Aenesidemus' ground for associating Heraclitus' philosophy with Scepticism, and for making the latter a tool for interpreting the former.

In the subsequent sentence of the text, which is also the last of the report on Aenesidemus, the point is added that the Sceptics limit themselves to observing that things display opposite properties, whereas the Heracliteans go on to assert that opposite properties are real in one and the same object. Perhaps also this last sentence expresses Aenesidemus' point of view, meaning that the Sceptic principle is only explicative of the Heraclitean one, which, as such, exceeds what the Sceptics are willing to admit. However, it is also possible that this sentence amounts to Sextus' own addition. Doubts are cast by the fact that while the path metaphor normally establishes a proximity between two things,⁶³ the sentence in question hints, by contrast, at a distance between Scepticism and Heracliteanism: for οἱ Ἡρακλείττειοι ἀπὸ τούτου μετέρχονται καὶ ἐπὶ κτλ. This is not Aenesidemus' game. Thus, one may suspect that Sextus' presentation here is affected by his refutative strategy. For one of the two objections which Sextus raises against Aenesidemus appears to recall precisely this point (212): *if it is true that Heraclitus' philosophy differs from Scepticism (and Aenesidemus himself does not deny it), then the natural task of the Sceptic is to combat it. If so, it is absurd at the same time to make Scepticism an instrument for understanding Heraclitus*: Sextus' own words go as follows:

It may be the case that the Sceptic way, far from being an aid to the knowledge of Heraclitus' philosophy, is actually an obstacle thereto, as the Sceptic decries all the dogmatic statements of Heraclitus as rash utterances, contradicting his world-conflagration, and contradicting his view that opposite qualities are both real in relation to the same object, and in respect of every dogma of Heraclitus scoffing at

⁶³ Sextus himself understood Aenesidemus' thesis in this way, at least to judge from the context in which he discusses it (209).

his dogmatic precipitancy [...] Now it is absurd to say that a conflicting doctrine is a path towards the system with which it is in conflict; therefore it is absurd to say that Scepticism is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus.⁶⁴

Sextus' target is not the actual doctrines which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus, but only the claim that the Sceptics are in a favourable position to understand Heraclitus. To this effect, Sextus does not scruple to mention putative aspects of Heraclitus' philosophy, like the Stoic-Heraclitean theory of world-conflagration, even if absent from Aenesidemus.⁶⁵ Sextus for his part believes that Heraclitus does not admit of interpretation of the kind Aenesidemus suggests, on the ground that the philosophy of Heraclitus, as well as any other dogmatic philosophy, is incompatible with Scepticism. In this respect, the argument differs from the other one as expounded at 211. In this latter argument, Sextus does not challenge the idea that Heracliteanism and Scepticism share at least the principle of conflicting appearances (τὸ τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φαίνεσθαι), and yet contends that, since this principle is a state of affairs upon which everybody agrees, Heraclitus' adhesion to it does not entail any special relationship with Scepticism:

In reply to him [Aenesidemus] we declare that the view about the same thing having opposite appearances is not a dogma of the Sceptics, but a state of affairs which is experienced not by the Sceptics alone, but also by the rest of philosophers. Indeed by all mankind. For certainly no-one would venture to say that honey does not taste sweet to people in sound health or that it does not taste bitter to those suffering from jaundice. So that the Heracliteans start from a notion which is common to all mankind, just as we also do, and possibly all other philosophers.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Μήποτε δὲ οὐ μόνον οὐ συνεργεῖ πρὸς τὴν γνῶσιν τῆς Ἡρακλειτείου φιλοσοφίας ἡ σκεπτικὴ ἀγωγή, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀποσυνεργεῖ, εἴγε ὁ σκεπτικὸς πάντα τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἡρακλείτου δογματιζόμενα ὡς προπετῶς λεγόμενα διαβάλλει, ἐναντιούμενος μὲν τῇ ἐκπυρώσει, ἐναντιούμενος δὲ τῷ τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπάρχειν, καὶ ἐπὶ παντὸς δόγματος τοῦ Ἡρακλείτου τὴν μὲν δογματικὴν προπέτειαν διασύρων [...] ἄτοπον δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ τὴν μαχομένην ἀγωγὴν ὁδὸν εἶναι λέγειν τῆς αἰρέσεως ἐκείνης ἢ μάχεται· ἄτοπον ἄρα τὸ τὴν σκεπτικὴν ἀγωγὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἡρακλειτείου φιλοσοφίαν ὁδὸν εἶναι λέγειν.

⁶⁵ Aenesidemus indicated air, and not fire, as the ἀρχή according to Heraclitus (Sext. Emp. *M.* 10.233), and this makes unlikely that the theory of cosmic conflagration into the element fire belonged to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus.

⁶⁶ φαμὲν πρὸς τοὺτους [τοὺς περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον] ὅτι τὸ τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φαίνεσθαι οὐ δόγμα ἐστὶ τῶν σκεπτικῶν ἀλλὰ πρᾶγμα οὐ μόνον τοῖς σκεπτικοῖς ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις φιλοσόφοις καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὑποπίπτον· οὐδεὶς γοῦν τολμήσαι ἂν εἰπεῖν ὅτι τὸ μέλι οὐ γλυκάζει τοὺς ὑγιαίνοντας ἢ ὅτι τοὺς ἰκτερικοὺς οὐ

Both arguments appear anything but conclusive. In one case Sextus invokes the incompatibility between Scepticism and dogmatism in a very narrow-minded fashion, deliberately ignoring the fact that some forms of dogmatism may well be less distant from Scepticism than others, and, at any rate, that a Sceptic may well be willing to urge the presence of Sceptical hints in non-Sceptical philosophers, without thereby being less Sceptic. In the other case Sextus overlooks the actual import of the principle of conflicting appearances, which does not lie in the mere observation that external objects display opposite properties, but in ruling out the possibility of deciding between these properties, as the Sceptics and Heraclitus do. As long as other philosophers maintain that it is possible to decide the opposition in favour of one of them, their philosophies develop *in spite of*, and not *on the basis of* this observation.

However, the weakness of Sextus' arguments should not lead us to miss his motivation for criticising Aenesidemus, which is a serious one: the link that Aenesidemus established between the Sceptical principle in terms of φαίνεσθαι and the Heraclitean one in terms of ὑπάρχειν, no matter what his goal, is such as to create confusion about the proper way in which to understand the Sceptics' φαίνεσθαι itself. Sextus at 209 is explicit as to the didactic purposes of his discussion of the philosophies allegedly cognate to Scepticism: "in order that we may more clearly understand the suspensive way of thought (ἵνα σαφέστερον τὴν ἐφεκτικὴν ἀγωγὴν κατανοήσωμεν)". As if the many occurrences of ὑπάρχειν in its strong, dogmatic meaning in Sextus were not enough, at *M.* 11.18-19 he goes even further by asserting that it is technically opposed to φαίνεσθαι:

The word ἔστι has two meanings, one of these is ὑπάρχει [...] and the other is φαίνεται [...] When, then, as Sceptics, we say "of existing things some *are* good, others evil, others between the two", as the element 'are' (ἔστιν) is twofold in meaning, we insert it as indicative not of real existence (ὑπαρξίς), but of appearance (φαίνεσθαι).

And at *PH* 1.14 Sextus states: "the dogmatist posits the things about which he is said to be dogmatizing as really existent (ὡς ὑπάρχον)". Thus, Heraclitus' tenet that τὰ ἐναντία ὑπάρχειν περὶ τὸ αὐτό, as Sextus understands it, cannot but take just one meaning, *ipso facto* labelling those who speak in these terms as 'dogmatist'. Sextus'

πικράζει, ὥστε ἀπὸ κοινῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων προλήψεως ἄρχονται οἱ Ἡρακλείτριοι, καθάπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς, ἴσως δὲ καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι φιλοσοφίαι.

concern is to prevent any misunderstanding as regards the Sceptical φαίνεσθαι.⁶⁷

It remains for us to detect why Aenesidemus did associate these two verbs, if he knew them to be incompatible. I shall return to this question in due course, and will also discuss Aenesidemus' notion of φαίνεσθαι and ὑπάρχειν. For the time being I shall be happy to observe that some unnamed Sceptics submitted Protagoras to a process of reinterpretation not unlike that to which Aenesidemus submitted Heraclitus. For, although Sextus usually interprets Protagoras' claim that everything is true as dogmatic,⁶⁸ other Sceptics understand it as a deliberate rejection of the criterion of truth instead, thus associating Protagoras with the Sceptics.⁶⁹ This shows that the very same tenet can be treated by the Sceptics in one way or another, depending on one's strategy (whether inclusive of other philosophical traditions, or exclusive), and, perhaps, also depending on one's terminological and conceptual framework.

⁶⁷ Thus, as we saw, Sextus already hints at the existence of a gap between speaking in terms of ὑπάρχειν and speaking in terms of φαίνεσθαι of the opposites, already when presenting Aenesidemus' thesis (οἱ μὲν σκεπτικοὶ φαίνεσθαι λέγουσι τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτό, οἱ δὲ Ἡρακλείτειοι ἀπὸ τούτου καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ὑπάρχειν αὐτὰ μετέρχονται), and then resumes this point when refuting Aenesidemus' thesis at 212: ὁ σκεπτικὸς ἐναντιούμενος τῷ τὰ ἐναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτό ὑπάρχειν κτλ.

⁶⁸ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.216-219.

⁶⁹ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.60-64: Καὶ Πρωταγόραν δὲ τὸν Ἀβδηρίτην ἐγκατέλεξαν τινες τῷ χορῷ τῶν ἀναιρούντων τὸ κριτήριον φιλοσόφων; cf. *M.* 7.49: ἐν τούτοις [τοῖς ἀναιροῦσι τὸ κριτήριον] δέ εἰσι καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως.

CHAPTER TWO

TRUTH (SEXT. EMP. *M.* 8.8)

II.1 *Appearances*

So far I have been considering the Sextus passage at *PH* 1.210-212. But what about the actual doctrines that Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus (that-which-appears-to-us-all is true, air is the substance of the soul, etc.), which are *prima facie* plainly dogmatic, and go far beyond what Heraclitus himself ever thought of? It is likely that the attribution of these doctrines to Heraclitus contributed to the discussion of the principle of conflicting appearances, which Aenesidemus identified as the ground for associating Heraclitus with the Sceptics. However, the doxographical form in which these doctrines have come down to us makes it difficult to assess what role they might have played in it.

Nevertheless, the peculiar manner in which ancient sources present the criterion of ‘that-which-appears-to-us-all’ (τὰ κοινῶς πᾶσι φαινόμενα), as against other doctrines of Aenesidemus καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον, encourages the idea that a genuinely Sceptical doctrine lies beneath the surface. Diogenes at 9.106 conflates this criterion, somewhat crudely, with Sceptical phenomenalism. If the process of corruption of the report was correctly outlined earlier, it reveals that the sources on which Diogenes depends led him to read this criterion within a Sceptical framework, whereas other elements of Aenesidemus’ interpretation of Heraclitus were to be passed over in silence as being less directly related to Scepticism, and thus irrelevant to an outline account of his thought. Sextus at *M.* 8.8 does distinguish between Aenesidemus the Heraclitean interpreter and Aenesidemus the Sceptic by means of the qualification καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον.⁷⁰ However, unlike other doctrines καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον, the criterion of that-which-appears-to-us-all is not refuted along with the other entries of the

⁷⁰ The MSS reading is οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον καὶ Ἡράκλειτον. However, by analogy with other reports, Bekker’s correction to οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον is convincing.

diaphonia at 8.4-10.⁷¹ The correspondence between the *diaphonia* and the relevant refutation, entry by entry, which Sextus declares and follows in the case of all other notions of truth, discourages the hypothesis that the absence of any refutation of Aenesidemus is due to carelessness. On the contrary, it may be taken to suggest that Sextus did not regard Aenesidemus' criterion καθ' Ἡράκλειτον as comparable to others.⁷² Why not?

The fairest way of tackling the question is, I believe, to examine closely the way in which the criterion is meant to work. I quote the relevant passage (Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8):

Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον and Epicurus both alike fell back on sense-objects (τὰ αἰσθητά), but differed as to details. Aenesidemus maintains that there is a difference in appearances (τὰ φαινόμενα): some of them appear to us all in common, and others are idiosyncratic; the former are true, and the latter are not so. Whence also that which does not escape the common knowledge is by derivation termed 'true'. Epicurus, by contrast, maintains that whatever one senses (τὰ αἰσθητά) is both true and existent.⁷³

⁷¹ When presenting his agenda at *M.* 8.14, Sextus expresses the proposal of expounding both the *aporiai* which apply to the notion of truth in general and those which apply to each of its dogmatic formulations, as these have been expounded at *M.* 8.4-10: χωρῶμεν ἐπὶ τὰς κατὰ μέρος ἀπορίας, ὧν αἱ μὲν κοινότερον χειρισθῆσονται πρὸς πάσας τὰς ἐκκειμένας στάσεις, αἱ δ' ἰδιαιτέρον πρὸς ἐκάστην. Accordingly, after setting forth the general *aporiai*, he restates his intention of raising the *aporiai* πρὸς ἐκάστην στάσιν: αἱ μὲν καθόλου ἀπορίαί περὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς τοιαῦταί τινες εἰσιν· ἀκολουθῶν δὲ ἔλθωμεν καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κατὰ μέρος (*M.* 8.55). However, no *aporia* relevant to Aenesidemus' Heraclitean notion of truth is found at the place where one would have expected it (8.55-68). Brochard (1887), p. 250, followed by Stough (1969), p. 95 n. 33 and p. 141, suggests that Sextus has Aenesidemus in mind when refuting the thesis that τὸ πολλοὺς πεῖθον is a criterion at 8.53-54 and 7.329. But Aenesidemus identifies the truth with that-which-appears-to-us-all, not just with that which persuades the majority. This makes a substantial difference between the two positions.

⁷² Aenesidemus is also mentioned at Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.40 as the author of the argument that "the true is neither sensible nor intelligible, and therefore does not exist". Aenesidemus' simultaneous presence in the dock among the dogmatists at 8 and on the bench as a Sceptic authority at 40 admittedly creates a bizarre impression. Sextus however, who does not provide any elucidation on the matter, appears not to envisage that the arrangement of his material might produce this effect. This, I believe, is because the clause καθ' Ἡράκλειτον should already have alerted his readers to the different framework in which to read the reference to Aenesidemus. We must bear in mind, in this regard, that the treatises which are incorporated in the work *Against the Professors* were addressed to advanced learners.

⁷³ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον καθ' Ἡράκλειτον καὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσθητά κοινῶς κατενεχθέντες ἐν εἵδει διέστησαν. οἱ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον λέγουσιν ὅτι τῶν φαινομένων διαφορὰν, καὶ φασὶ τούτων τὰ μὲν κοινῶς πᾶσι φαίνεσθαι τὰ δὲ ἰδίως τινί, ὧν ἀληθὴ μὲν εἶναι τὰ κοινῶς πᾶσι φαινόμενα, ψευδῆ δὲ τὰ μὴ τοιαῦτα· ὅθεν καὶ ἀληθὲς φερωνύμως εἰρησθαι τὸ μὴ λῆθον τὴν κοινὴν γνώμην. ὁ δὲ Ἐπίκουρος τὰ μὲν αἰσθητά πάντα ἔλεγεν ἀληθῆ καὶ ὄντα.

The first thing to take into account is that Aenesidemus' criterion καθ' Ἡράκλειτον only covers sense-objects (αἰσθητά), or 'appearances' (φαινόμενα) as sense-objects. Sextus, when introducing the entry of Aenesidemus and Epicurus within the *diaphonia* on truth at *M.* 8.4-10, speaks of αἰσθητά, but, while spelling out Aenesidemus' position, abruptly switches to φαινόμενα, thus taking for granted that the two terms are coextensive.⁷⁴ If φαινόμενα is the term originally used by Aenesidemus, as the run of the report suggests, one might have suspected that its identification with αἰσθητά amounts to Sextus' own interpretation.⁷⁵ However, this conclusion is wrong. For Aenesidemus' inclusion in the entry of those who reject thought-objects and admit sense-objects alone, which precedes Sextus, already entails this identification. Diogenes at 9.106, who talks of Aenesidemus' and Epicurus' φαινόμενον in the same breath, confirms this, since the 'appearances' that Epicurus posited as a criterion amount to *sense*-appearances, that is, sense-objects.⁷⁶

This meaning of the term φαινόμενον is to be contrasted with the one that it usually takes in Sextus and other late authors, in whom it shifts to indicate what is immediately plain through sensation but also thought: τὸ ἐναργές. It is for this reason that Sextus, elsewhere in his work, after the only quotation of Aenesidemus' words that he gives, differentiates his own usage from Aenesidemus': "Indeed by 'appearances' Aenesidemus seemed to refer to sense-objects" (*M.* 8.216: καὶ δὴ τοίνυν 'φαινόμενα' μὲν ἔοικε καλεῖν ὁ Αἰνῆσιδῆμος τὰ αἰσθητά).⁷⁷ Therefore, the spin, if any, that one might have expected to find at *M.* 8.8 should have taken place along the opposite line to that which

⁷⁴ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδῆμον καθ' Ἡράκλειτον καὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον ἐπὶ τὰ αἰσθητὰ κοινῶς κατενεχθέντες ἐν εἵδει διέστησαν. οἱ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδῆμον λέγουσι τινα τῶν φαινόμενων διαφορὰν κτλ.

⁷⁵ This is Pérez's interpretation at Pérez (1993), p. 240.

⁷⁶ The term φαινόμενον at Diog. L. 9.106 is meant to reword Epicurus' notion of αἰσθησις in Sceptical jargon, as also happens at Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.369.

⁷⁷ On the assumption that the reference of Aenesidemus' appearances are the same as Sextus', this clause is commonly read as indicating an exception within Aenesidemus' usage, the particle δὴ being translated as 'here', 'in this context'. Barnes (1983b), p. 192 n. 35 questions this interpretation, and the case of Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8 seems to me to reinforce the doubts. As to the meaning of the particle δὴ, Janáček (1948), pp. 24-26, discussing Sextus' overall usage of καὶ δὴ, suggests that it introduces a new idea. This proposal, however, does not capture the meaning that καὶ δὴ appears to have at *M.* 8.215-6, in the context of a gloss on what has been just said. Decleva Caizzi (1992b), p. 291 n. 25 suggests that "il valore della particella è piuttosto di esprimere una nota di riserva, enfatizzando la citazione". Along these lines, one may suppose that Sextus at *M.* 8.215-6 intended to distance himself from Aenesidemus' jargon.

one finds there, that is, along the line of conflating Aenesidemus' φαίνόμενον with Sextus' own, and expanding its range to any appearance whatsoever. Sextus' unexpected accuracy at *M.* 8.8, as well as at *M.* 8.216, in indicating the correct way in which to understand Aenesidemus suggests that there was an acknowledged gap between early and late Sceptics on the matter.

Sextus is usually found adopting two classifications of things: one contrasts appearances (φαίνόμενα) with thought-objects (νοούμενα), the other contrasts appearances, or 'evident things' (πρόδηλα), with non-evident things (ἄδηλα). The former classification entails the narrow meaning of appearances as sense-objects (αἰσθητά), which is found in Aenesidemus;⁷⁸ the latter classification could be co-extensive with the φαίνόμενα/νοούμενα one (it presumably was so for Aenesidemus). However, Sextus understands it as allowing the existence of 'appearances', as 'directly-grasped' things (ἐξ αὐτῶν ληπτά), of intelligible origin.⁷⁹ The idea that there are self-evident notions of the mind (that is, neither derived from sense-perceptions nor in need of any argument) is distinctively post-Hellenistic. It would perhaps be an unfair generalisation to say that it exceeds the thought pattern of Hellenistic epistemology. Assessment of this problem depends upon assessment of the epistemic status of *prolepseis*, which both Epicureans and Stoics regarded as one of the bases of our cognitive access to things, and which are sometimes presented in terms which might suggest some degree of non-perceptual self-evidence.⁸⁰ It remains a fact, however, that the term φαίνόμενα is never used in this sense before the Platonist and Aristotelian renaissance which marks the end of Hellenistic philosophy. Philo of Alexandria at the beginning of our era still has 'appearances' as a synonym of 'sense-objects'.⁸¹

⁷⁸ See Sextus' comment on the formula ἔστι δὲ ἡ σκεπτικὴ δύναμις ἀντιθετικὴ φαινόμενων τε καὶ νοουμένων at *PH* 1.8-9: 'φαίνόμενα' δὲ λαμβάνομεν νῦν τὰ αἰσθητά, διόπερ ἀντιδιαστέλλομεν αὐτοῖς τὰ νοητά.

⁷⁹ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.141: ἐπεὶ τῶν πραγμάτων διττὴ τις ἔστι κατὰ τὸ ἀνωτάτω διαφορά, καθ' ἣν τὰ μὲν ἔστι πρόδηλα, τὰ δὲ ἄδηλα, καὶ πρόδηλα μὲν τὰ αὐτόθεν ὑποπίπτοντα ταῖς τε αἰσθήσεσι καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, ἄδηλα δὲ τὰ μὴ ἐξ αὐτῶν ληπτά. The clearest piece of evidence for this is at *M.* 8.362, where Sextus puts forward the twofold nature of the 'phenomenal', sensible and intelligible: τὰ φαίνόμενα, εἴτε αἰσθητὰ εἴη εἴτε νοητά, κτλ. (see also *PH* 2.10).

⁸⁰ My own impression is, however, that the Hellenistic notion of self-evidence always ultimately has a sense-perceptual reference. Nothing of my argument, however, turns on this point.

⁸¹ See for instance *Agr.* 42: "the unwise soul believes that only things which can be seen and which appear are good, and is deceived by the colours and

The most telling evidence for the existence of two conflicting ideas of ‘appearance’ is found in Galen, who retrojects the broad usage of the term onto ‘the ancient philosophers’ (Plato and Aristotle), differentiating this usage from that of the Empiricist physicians, whose appearances are merely objects of sensory experience:

The Empiricists absolutely refuse to call anything which seems to be known by reason alone ‘appearance’. The ancient philosophers, on the contrary, said that there are two classes of appearances: one of which is discerned by the senses, such as pale and dark, hard and soft, hot and cold, and the like (here they agree with the Empiricists); the other being that class of things which are grasped by the intellect directly.⁸²

The reference is to indemonstrable but intuitive truths, such as the first principles of mathematics and logic.⁸³ Sextus, of course, rejects the idea that there exist indemonstrated truths of this kind.⁸⁴ However, he is willing to admit ‘un-dogmatically’ (ἀδοξάστως) noetic appearances, on the grounds that “we are naturally thoughtful” (*PH* 1.24: φυσικῶς [...] νοητικοί ἐσμεν). His discussion of motion at *M.* 10.65-66 is telling: in the middle of reporting a pre-existing argument to the effect that motion is not a sense-object, and hence, presumably, that it is a thought-object and hence ‘obscure’,⁸⁵ he breaks into it, and says: “however, it does not matter whether motion is a sense-

shadows of things and becomes a slave of them” (τῆς τοῦ ἄφρονος νυχῆς τὰ αἰσθητὰ μόνα καὶ φαινόμενα νομιζούσης ἀγαθὰ, χρώμασι καὶ σκιαῖς ἡπατημένης καὶ δεδουλωμένης).

⁸² Gal. *Meth. med.* 10.36.

⁸³ On the Galen passage see Hankinson’s commentary in Hankinson (1991), pp. 126-128. Alexander, *De fato* 186 puts forward yet another notion of φαινόμενον, such as to cover everything which turns out to be the case: οὐ γὰρ φαντασία τὸ φαινόμενον πᾶν. ἡ μὲν γὰρ φαντασία ἀπλὴ τε καὶ χωρὶς λόγου ὑπὸ τῶν ἐξωθεν προσπιπτόντων γίνεται, ἐοικυῖα ταῖς αἰσθητικαῖς ἐνεργείαις [...] φαίνεται δέ τινα καὶ διὰ λόγου τε καὶ παρὰ συλλογισμοῦ τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ φαίνεσθαι λαμβάνοντα, ἃ οὐκέτ’ ἂν τις φαντασίας λέγοι. Epictetus at *Encheir.* 1.5 similarly distinguishes between *phainomenon* and *phantasia*, the former indicating the persuasive content of the latter. This distinction is certainly alien to the Sceptics; see Diog. L.9.107: “if different *phantasiai* come about, then we will say of both that they appear (φαίνεσθαι); and for this reason we admit appearances in that they appear”. This last passage is discussed in Striker (1996), pp. 146-147, who observes that “it is clear that they [the Sceptics] are not appealing to the difference between bare sense-appearances and what one is inclined to believe”.

⁸⁴ This emerges from Agrippa’s fourth trope (ὁ δ’ ἐξ ὑποθέσεως), as expounded by Sextus at *PH* 1.168 and Diog. L. 9.89. See also *M.* 8.357-361 on ‘apparent’ premises. Cortassa (1975) points out the existence of two different notions of appearances in Sextus: one dogmatic and one Sceptic.

⁸⁵ At least this is a typical argument pattern employed by the Sceptics, and one which I discuss below ch. III.8.

object or whether it is a thought-object, for it is plain that evidence seems to bear out the view that motion exists".⁸⁶ The Methodists' appearances arguably fall within the same class of non-sensory appearances (*PH* 1.237-241). A typical instance of noetic appearances in Sextus are 'judgemental' appearances,⁸⁷ such as Sceptical tenets and arguments in his presentation of them.

This latter usage of the term 'appearances' tends to collapse into that of the verb 'to appear' (φαίνεσθαι) as expressing the impression by which I am affected, but to which I am not committed, thus providing the basis of the Sceptical criterion of life. This is the distinctively Sceptical notion of φαίνεσθαι, as Sextus presents it at *PH* 1.19-22. Insofar as φαίνεσθαι describes merely the character, not the content, of the Sceptical criterion of conduct (that is, insofar as φαίνεσθαι describes not what sort of things the Sceptic admits, but merely the limits within which he admits them), the question of whether these things are sense- or thought-objects does not seem to matter. For everything could fall into the range of that-which-appears-to-us, as long as we are subjectively impressed by it. However, if the reference of Aenesidemus' 'appearance' is to sense-objects, one may wonder whether his φαίνεσθαι too was merely a synonym for the passive sense of αἰσθάνεσθαι, as it had already been for Protagoras as interpreted by Plato *Tht.* 152 b-c.

Of the very few pieces of evidence that have come down to us concerning Aenesidemus' φαίνεσθαι, one tells us that he appealed to Timon's saying: "I do not posit that honey is sweet, but I do admit that it appears so".⁸⁸ Here φαίνεσθαι applies to sense-perceptible properties of things, so that Aenesidemus may well have interpreted it as carrying the narrow perceptual sense. This hypothesis squares well with the fact that he is nowhere found invoking the defence based on the warning that Sceptical utterances should be preceded by the words: "it appears that...".⁸⁹ This is hardly a matter of

⁸⁶ See also Sext. Emp. *PH* 3.65: ὅσον ἐπὶ τοῖς φαινομένοις δοκεῖν εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν. The passage at *M.* 10.65-66 is interesting, because it suggests that Sextus is unhappy with the argument which he borrowed from οἱ ἀπορητικοί (mentioned at 68). Woodruff (1988) hypothesises that by οἱ ἀπορητικοί Sextus refers to Aenesidemus and his early followers. I return to *M.* 10.65-66 below n. 222.

⁸⁷ For a definition of 'judgemental' appearances, as opposed to 'phenomenal' ones, see Annas and Barnes (1985), pp. 23-24.

⁸⁸ Diog. L. 9.105: τὸ μέλι ὅτι ἐστὶ γλυκὺ οὐ τίθημι τὸ δ' ὅτι φαίνεται ὁμολογῶ.

⁸⁹ Neither Photius nor Aristocles attributes that line of defence to Aenesidemus. Anonym. *In Theaet.* 61.10-15 does attribute it to the 'Pyrrhonists', but the dating of the commentary is controversial (see the opposite conclusions of Bastianini

coincidence. Rather, it suggests that his notion of φαίνεσθαι precluded him the possibility of conceiving ‘judgemental’ appearances.

The idea that ‘that-which-appears-to-one’ stands for ‘that-which-affects-one’s-senses’, and hence the usage of φαίνεσθαι as a synonym for the passive sense of αἰσθάνεσθαι, is often found in Sextus, even if Sextus himself is no longer committed to it.⁹⁰ Along these lines, he claims that appearances are beyond any investigation and are a criterion of life, on account of their sense-perceptual nature: “honey appears sweet to us, and this we grant, insofar as being sweetened is a matter of sensory experience”.⁹¹

This notion of φαίνεσθαι is remarkably close to that of the Empiricists, to whom Galen ascribes the definition: “apparent things are those which impress the senses” (‘φαίνεται τὰ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ὑποπίπτοντα’).⁹² Accordingly, judgemental appearances do not qualify as ‘apparent’ for the Empiricists.⁹³ A telling case is their discussion of pulsation at Gal. *Dign. puls.* 8.780-781: the Empiricists admit that arteries ‘beat’, but not that they ‘pulse’, the former being something that touch perceives, the latter not. Along these lines, although the Empiricists regard the hypothesis that arteries pulse as a plausible one,⁹⁴ they reject it all the same “following that-which-appears” (κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον).

Thus, the subject-matter of the Empiricists’ φαίνεσθαι are observational data alone, without any rational inference to the hidden nature of things.⁹⁵ Galen at *Dign. puls.* 8.781 brings in Pyrrho’s

and Sedley (1995), pp. 254-256 and Brittain (2001), pp. 249-254), and therefore the text cannot be used as a source for Aenesidemus.

⁹⁰ Annas and Barnes (1985), p. 69 find him ‘confusing’.

⁹¹ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.20: φαίνεται ἡμῖν γλυκάζειν τὸ μέλι τοῦτο συγχωροῦμεν· γλυκαζόμεθα γὰρ αἰσθητικῶς. One may object that Sextus here refers to sensory appearances, merely in order to give an example, and that the point he is making need not have this limitation (the text is introduced by οἷον: “thus, for instance, honey”). Yet, I do not see how Sextus’ way of putting the matter here could apply to noetic appearances. Sextus writes: “thus, for instance, honey” simply because the point he is making applies to any sense-object whatsoever, and not just honey.

⁹² Gal. *Meth. med.* 10.36.

⁹³ *Ibid.*: οὐ πάντι συγχωροῦσιν οὐδὲν τῶν τῷ λόγῳ μόνῃ δοκούντων ἐγνώσθαι φαινόμενον ὀνομάζειν.

⁹⁴ *Dign. puls.* 8.776: λόγῳ ἴσως ἂν τις πιστώσαιτο αὐτήν.

⁹⁵ Frede (1988) suggests that, from Heraclides (early first century BC) onward, the Empiricists dropped their original sensualism, conceding to reasoning a proper place in their epistemology. However, no actual gap is found between early and late Empiricists on the matter (the Empiricists’ treatment of pulsation is telling in this regard). Thus, either Heraclides remained an isolated figure within the history of the Empiricist school, or not even Heraclides actually meant to modify the original framework of Empiricist doctrine, besides a minor shift in its formu-

spokesman Timon as the Empiricists' authority on the matter, and this suggests that they considered this notion of 'appearing' to express Pyrrho's own. It is unlikely that they developed this interpretation of Pyrrho by themselves and in opposition to those who claimed to be Pyrrho's epigons. The most obvious hypothesis is, rather, that the Empiricists borrowed this interpretation of Pyrrho from the Sceptics. True, our more extended Sceptical source, Sextus, seems to offer little support to this hypothesis. For, as I said, his phenomenalism amounts to a cautious attitude which enables him to endorse any belief, or make any statement, he likes, with no limitation as to subject-matter, provided that he does not commit himself to it. However, the thought-objects which he is found to admit κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον usually are his own arguments, and their classification as mere 'appearances' is arguably nothing more than a manoeuvre to forestall the charge of negative dogmatism. Sextus' characterisation of the Sceptical utterances as 'appearance' statements could be read along similar lines. Some scholars invoke such occurrences of φαίνεσθαι in Sextus in order to challenge Stough's identification of the Sceptics' appearances primarily as *sensory* appearances.⁹⁶ No-one of these scholars, however, goes into the question of the *history* of the Sceptics' notion of 'appearing', which is crucial if one is to adjudicate what belongs to the core of Sceptical phenomenalism, and what is, by contrast, an addition to it.

It is unfortunate that evidence on Aenesidemus is very meagre. But at least the texts available suggest that his usage of the term is closer to that of the Empiricists than to Sextus', as we have seen. This agreement between the Empiricists and Aenesidemus makes good sense of why the Empiricist school of medicine, though well established before, and independently of, Aenesidemus' restoration of Pyrrhonism, ends up coalescing with it. This is the case of eminent Empiricist doctors such as Menodotus, Theodas and Theodosius, who are simultaneously leading figures of the Sceptical school. Sextus himself is, it seems, a dissident Empiricist. The connection may well date as far back as Aenesidemus. Indeed, one may go so far as to hypothesise that his revival of 'Pyrrhonism' originated from within the Empiricist milieu in Alexandria.⁹⁷ For, we learn from one ancient

lation (more on this below ch. V.4).

⁹⁶ See Frede (1979); Burnyeat (1983), p. 127; Annas and Barnes (1985), pp. 23-24.

⁹⁷ The hypothesis is in Frede (1987), pp. 251-252.

source that he was based in that town.⁹⁸ According to another source, he was taught by a certain Heraclides. The identification of this Heraclides with the namesake physician of Tarantum is controversial, and will probably remain. However, contrary to what is often claimed,⁹⁹ this identification by no means defies the chronology of the Empiricist Heraclides.¹⁰⁰

This identification is due to remain a mere hypothesis. It is a fact, by contrast, that medicine provides Aenesidemus' direct antecedent for his usage of the term *φανόμενον*, as a survey in Hellenistic philosophical and scientific literature shows.¹⁰¹ The term either does not occur at all, or does not have any significant place in the epistemology of the major Hellenistic schools. The former is the case of the Stoics;¹⁰² the latter of Epicurus, who uses the term *φανόμενα* in the sense of 'observational data'.¹⁰³ In so doing Epicurus conforms to science jargon, the best-known instance of which is, perhaps, the title of Aratus' poem, derived from Eudoxus. This usage is shared by physicians in Alexandria, both Empiricists and 'Rationalists', for referring to the symptoms of diseases, and the effect of drugs, and the like, as opposed to the hidden causes of things, which are merely 'putative with the aid of reasoning' (*λόγῳ θεωρητά*).¹⁰⁴ It is presumably from here that Aenesidemus borrows his usage of the term as a synonym of 'sense-object' (*αἰσθητόν*), as opposed to 'thought-object' (*νοητόν*).¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Aristocl. ap. Euseb. *PE* 14.18.29.

⁹⁹ So it has been argued by Brochard (1887), pp. 232-236, and repeated throughout literature on Scepticism.

¹⁰⁰ The report is at Diogenes Laertius 9.115. The *akme* of Heraclides of Tarantum has been firmly established between 100-75 BC (Guardasole (1997), p. 23), as it happens, one generation before Aenesidemus (*fl.* second quarter of the first cent. BC; see Polito (2002) for a recent *status quaestionis*).

¹⁰¹ Barney in her 1992 paper provides a valuable account of the antecedents of Aenesidemus' *φανόμενον* in philosophical material. However, she fails to distinguish between *φανόμενον* and *φαντασία*. Moreover, she treats Epictetus as evidence for an allegedly Stoic usage of the term *φανόμενον* preceding that of the Sceptics, something which is anachronistic. Finally, Barney leaves aside medicine and science, and this, so to speak, cripples her investigation.

¹⁰² The term *φανόμενον* is absent from Adler's *Index Verborum* (SVF 4 s.v.).

¹⁰³ On the occurrences of *φανόμενον* in Epicurus see Usener's *Glossarium Epicureum*, s.v.

¹⁰⁴ This usage can be traced back to the Lyceum, whose influence on science in Alexandria is well known. See von Staden (1989), pp. 115-124.

¹⁰⁵ In this context I should mention a remark which Gisela Striker has raised to me in private conversation: the Empiricists' dichotomy is between visible vs. non-visible features of things, and it is qualitatively different from that attributable to Aenesidemus, which features appearances vs. realities (the argument is already in

As far as the Cyrenaics are concerned, although their sensualism has much in common with Aenesidemus' phenomenism, it is not clear whether they made use of the expression τὸ φαίνόμενον. Sextus does ascribe it to them, and expounds their theory of knowledge at *M.* 7.191-200 in terms which recall Sceptical phenomenism closely, but he may be superimposing a later terminology on them. Diogenes, a more reliable source on the matter, speaks of 'affections' (πάθη). However, a passage in Plutarch might be taken to suggest that by the time of Colotes (third century BC) the Cyrenaics already had a notion of φαίνεσθαι comparable to that of Aenesidemus.¹⁰⁶ If this is the case, it is possible that Aenesidemus was also influenced by the Cyrenaics. One recalls that eminent Cyrenaics such as Hegesias and Theodorus were based in Alexandria, likewise Aenesidemus.

In the case of the Academy, which some scholars regard as the school to which Aenesidemus had been attached before re-establishing 'Pyrrhonist' Scepticism,¹⁰⁷ and thus by which he was influenced while setting out his doctrine, there is no evidence that they ever used the expression τὸ φαίνόμενον.¹⁰⁸ Those commentators who believe that Aenesidemus' phenomenism is a revised form of Academic probabilism fail to mention that so crucial a term for Aenesidemus is not there. The Academics invariably use the Stoic term φαντασία. The terms φαίνόμενον and φαντασία are, of course, cognate, but by no means co-extensive. The term φαντασία conveys by the Stoic definition the idea that sense-reports throw light (φῶς) onto external objects.¹⁰⁹ The Academics are happy with it: they do not challenge the idea that sense-reports reveal the nature of external objects, at least in principle; rather, they do away with a criterion for

Allen (1993), pp. 654-653). It may be so, but the terminology is the same, and Sceptics and Empiricists go on to claim allegiance to one another for centuries, failing to notice that by 'appearances' they refer to different things (not even Sextus' criticism of the Empiricists at *PH* 1.236-241 evinces awareness of the difference). Perhaps they are not different things after all. More on the Empiricists ch. III.4 below.

¹⁰⁶ See Plut. *Col.* 1120 b (= Aristippus B 69 Giannantonio).

¹⁰⁷ Phot. *Bibl.* 212 169b 32-35 is the only evidence for Aenesidemus' alleged membership to the Academy. However, the meaning of the passage is disputed; see the opposite conclusions of Decleva Caizzi (1992a), and Mansfeld (1996). I offer a close examination of the text in Polito (2002).

¹⁰⁸ We do find the present participle of φαίνεσθαι in Sextus' account of Carneades at Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.169-190, but not in its substantivised form, nor connoting any thematic idea. Cicero in his *Academica* speaks of *ea quae apparent* and *visa*, but the expression translates Greek φαντασία (*Ac.* 1.40; 2.18).

¹⁰⁹ See Aetius 4.12.3 = LS 39B: εἴρηται δ' ἡ φαντασία ἀπὸ τοῦ φωτός· καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ φῶς αὐτὸ δεικνύσι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ περιεχόμενα, καὶ ἡ φαντασία δεικνύσιν ἑαυτὴν καὶ τὸ πεποιηκὸς αὐτὴν. The same etymology is found in Aristotle.

distinguishing between true and false reports, and hence challenge the Stoic claim of infallibility. Accordingly, the φαντασία which the Academics posited as a criterion for everyday life is qualified by the adjective ‘persuasive’ (πιθανή). By contrast, the substantivised participle τὸ φαινόμενον is used by Aenesidemus and his epigons as a synonym of τὸ προσπίπτον and τὸ πάθος, and it merely connotes the affection that our senses undergo, that is, the incorrigible sense datum. No representationalist theory of knowledge is presupposed. The actual properties of things are, and remain in the dark, without any possibility for us to establish different degrees of persuasiveness.¹¹⁰ Thus, neither Aenesidemus’ phenomenalism is to be conflated with the Academics’ probabilism, nor his φαινόμενον with the Academic φαντασία.

Aenesidemus, for his part, used to claim that he derived his notion of φαινόμενον from Pyrrho and Timon. However, if Aenesidemus’ φαινόμενον is the sense datum anterior to any judgement, and if it provides a standard for life, it is hardly a legacy of Pyrrho. For Pyrrho’s attitude towards the senses is completely different,¹¹¹ and his ‘appearance’ is arguably the deceiving beliefs to which humans yield, as they should not do, if they were to follow him.¹¹² One cannot rule out the hypothesis that Aenesidemus believed he was interpreting

¹¹⁰ This meaning of the term φαινόμενον is established by as early as the Cyrenaics according to Sextus *M.* 7.194-5: ὅθεν ἦτοι τὰ πάθη φαινόμενα θετέον ἢ τὰ ποιητικά τῶν παθῶν. καὶ εἰ μὲν τὰ πάθη φανέν εἶναι φαινόμενα, πάντα τὰ φαινόμενα λεκτέον ἀληθῆ καὶ καταληπτά· εἰ δὲ τὰ ποιητικά τῶν παθῶν προσαγορεύομεν φαινόμενα, πάντα ἐστὶ τὰ φαινόμενα ψευδῆ καὶ πάντα ἀκατάληπτα. τὸ γὰρ περὶ ἡμᾶς συμβαῖνον πάθος ἑαυτοῦ πλέον οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ἐνδείκνυται. ἔνθεν καὶ (εἰ χρὴ τάληθές λέγειν) μόνον τὸ πάθος ἡμῖν ἐστὶ φαινόμενον· τὸ δ’ ἐκτὸς καὶ τοῦ πάθους ποιητικὸν τάχα μὲν ἐστὶν ὄν, οὐ φαινόμενον δὲ ἡμῖν.

¹¹¹ According to Antigonos of Caristus, the basic source of all accounts of Pyrrho’s life, Pyrrho “left nothing to the arbitrament of the senses” (ὅλως μηδὲν ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ἐπιτρέπειν); see Diog. L. 9.62 (= Pyrrho 6 DC). At Diog. L. 9.66 (= Pyrrho 15A DC) Antigonos has Pyrrho maintains that we should “get rid of our humanity” (ἐκδύναί τὸν ἄνθρωπον) and “fight against things” (διαγωνίζεσθαι πρὸς τὰ πράγματα). Aenesidemus rejects Antigonos’ account (Diog. L. 9.62 = Pyrrho 7 DC), but Cicero shows that a similar interpretation was authoritative also among doxographers; see Pyrrho TT. 69A-M DC, and the editor’s commentary in Decleva Caizzi (1885), pp. 268-271.

¹¹² Those scholars who believe that Pyrrho’s φαινόμενον is a criterion of life invoke two sayings of Timon (see Pyrrho TT. 55 and 63 DC). Bett (2000), pp. 84-93 is the most recent. However, the ‘philosophical’ sayings of Timon which have come down to us are only a selection made, as it happens, by the Sceptics in order to trace their phenomenalism back to Pyrrho. What is most, these saying themselves can also be understood as making the opposite point to the one the Sceptics have them do (see Decleva Caizzi (1885), pp. 236-241 and pp. 262-264).

Pyrrho correctly. It remains a fact, however, that Aenesidemus retrojected onto Pyrrho an idea that he had drawn out from somewhere else, and that he himself developed.

II.2 *Agreement*

So far I have focused on the ‘sensualist’ reference of Aenesidemus’ appearance. However, the idea that our cognitive access to things, if any, is given by sensation is a common one in Hellenistic epistemology. What characterises Aenesidemus’ criterion καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον is, rather, the fact that it rules out any intellectual contribution to our understanding of things. Our ideas of things, so far as they can be valid, do not only proceed from, but also end in sensory data. Evidence for the distinctively sensualist nature of Aenesidemus’ criterion is the place that this occupies within the *diaphonia* at *M.* 8.8, in which it is contrasted with the rationalist criterion of Democritus and Plato, but also with the ‘mixed’ criterion, here ascribed to the Stoics, elsewhere also to the Peripatetics and even the Academics.¹¹³ By ‘mixed criterion’ one understands a criterion which does identify the senses as the basis of our knowledge of things, and yet ascribes to intellect the job of adjudicating them.

Once our cognitive access to things has been restricted to sensation, the question arises of establishing how sensory data relate to the external world. One option is to infer from the subjective reality of our sensory affections to their objective truth, thus regarding each of them as corresponding to an external state of affairs. This point of view, which Sextus at *M.* 8.4-10 ascribes to Epicurus, is usually attributed to Protagoras, according to whom “the soul is nothing apart from the senses [...] and everything is true”.¹¹⁴ However, Aenesidemus at *M.* 8.8 rejects this point of view, differentiating between true and false appearances. If later Sceptics’ understanding of Protagoras voices Aenesidemus’ own, Sextus provides us with interesting material. Protagoras, Sextus argues, does not address the epistemological problem of what is true and what is false, since holding everything to

¹¹³ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.388.

¹¹⁴ Diog. L. 9.51. Diogenes juxtaposes the two statements, but the former is the premise of the latter: if the soul is nothing but sensation, *then* everything is true, as Plato, Diogenes’ authority, understands it in the *Theaetetus*. For the view that the all appearances are true see Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.369, in which Protagoras is coupled with Epicurus: οἱ δὲ πάντα [τὰ φαινόμενα] ἔθεσαν, ὥς οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον καὶ Πρωταγόραν. Thus also Aristocles *ap. Eus. PE* 14.2.4-6.

be true entails the dismissal of the very notion of truth as opposed to falsehood.¹¹⁵ Moreover, Protagoras' thesis that all appearances, though conflicting with one another, are true, is nonsensical:

Not every appearance is true [...] since otherwise, as appearances are frequently conflicting, we should allow that conflicting things are alike real and are equally true, which is absurd.¹¹⁶

The Sceptics for their part believe that the disagreement among appearances, which, like Protagoras, they consider to be undecidable, is reason enough to question their reliability altogether, thus bringing about suspension of judgement: "Everything which is not agreed is obscure".¹¹⁷ This is a conclusion which is neither obvious nor required within a Protagorean framework. For it is only if one adopts the principle of non-contradiction, allegedly rejected by Protagoras, but accepted by the Sceptics, that disagreement can be plausibly cited as a reason for suspension of judgement.

It is, thus, no accident if Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' truth, unlike Epicurus' and Protagoras', presupposes a selection between true and false appearances. However, this selection, in Aenesidemus' view, does not proceed from the intervention of intellect, as the Stoics maintain: his entry is the same as Epicurus, and opposite to that of the Stoics. What Aenesidemus has in mind is, it seems, a phenomenal survey on the agreement or disagreement with which we sense things.¹¹⁸ The way in which this criterion works at its basic level may

¹¹⁵ On the περὶ τροπή which Protagoras' thesis undergoes see *M.* 7.389-398 and Burnyeat (1976). By contrast, Sextus at *M.* 7.60-64 reads Protagoras as straightforwardly rejecting the criterion of truth (*contra PH* 1.216-219 and the usual place which Protagoras occupies in the *diaphonia* on the criterion; see above ch. 1.5).

¹¹⁶ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.18: ἀλλὰ πᾶν μὲν φαινόμενον οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθές [...] ἐπεὶ δεῖσται, τῶν φαινομένων πολλὴν ἔχοντων μάχην, ὁμολογεῖν τὰ μαχόμενα συνυπάρχειν καὶ ἐπ' ἴσης ἀληθῆ καθεστάναι· ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἄτοπον. See also *M.* 8.2: οὐχὶ δέ γε τὰ μαχόμενα δύναται εἶναι ἀληθῆ, *M.* 8.119: τὰ δὲ μαχόμενα οὐ δύναται ἐπ' ἴσης εἶναι πιστά, *M.* 8.34: πάντων ὄντων ἀληθῶν θήσομεν τὰ μαχόμενα ἀληθῆ, τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν ἄτοπον. On the Sceptics' opposition to Protagoras see also Elias, in *Aristot. categorias*, 1.1.109: οὗτοι [οἱ Ἐφεκτικοί] δὲ ἀντίκεινται τοῖς Πρωταγορείοις κτλ.

¹¹⁷ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.178: πᾶν τὸ διάφωνον ἄδηλόν ἐστι. Burnyeat (1979) discusses the question of whether the conflicting appearances argument is conclusive, denouncing some unspoken assumptions on which it relies.

¹¹⁸ Sextus at *M.* 8.40-44, arguing that nothing is true, has Aenesidemus make the point that sensation does not have the power to discern truth, because discerning truth is the job of reason. How are we to reconcile this point with Aenesidemus' view καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, that the senses, if anything, access truth, and that no intellectual contribution is required? Perhaps Aenesidemus at *M.* 8.40-44 is just borrowing an idea from his opponents for the sake of the argument. However, in fact, the idea that the bare senses cannot discern truth is not incompatible with the

be the following: if those who taste honey share a common feeling of sweetness (κοινὸν φαινόμενον), then this feeling could be described as true and trustworthy (πιστόν),¹¹⁹ and one could conclude that honey is indeed sweet. If, on the contrary, honey tastes sweet to x and bitter to y, the two conflicting feelings of sweetness and bitterness turn out to be both idiosyncratic and hence unreliable, thus making the inner nature of honey irrecoverable. The case of honey can be extended to all sense objects, and since *all* sense-reports are for Aenesidemus idiosyncratic and in conflict (at least this is his point in the tropes), he cannot but have considered the class of ‘common appearances’ to be empty, and, therefore, his Heraclitean criterion of truth to be counterfactual, or at least purely notional. Thus, the criterion of commonly agreed appearances, starting from common-sensical premises (contraries cannot be simultaneously true; any truth should be publicly available and therefore a matter of common agreement), acts as a powerful means towards suspension of judgement. For, if all appearances are idiosyncratic and ‘false’, then they are all equally trustworthy and untrustworthy, and ἰσοσθένεια follows.¹²⁰

The way in which Sextus presents the criterion at *M.* 8.8 could perhaps suggest that, in Aenesidemus’ view, there are such cases of universal agreement.¹²¹ But the text could be satisfactorily read also as providing a mere definition of the two hypothetical classes of appearances, on the basis of which to effect the equally hypothetical selection between true and false ones, without any hint that universally agreed appearances actually exist.

sensualism which I attribute to Aenesidemus. We know that the Empiricists invoke a special kind of reason, ‘common reason’, which accomplishes a rudimentary data elaboration. The Empiricists are nonetheless careful to specify that this common reason is based on sense-perceptual experience and memory, and that it is not a separate faculty. Aenesidemus might have something of this kind in mind. To be sure, common reason is in charge of detecting that-which-appears-to-us-all, and hence the truth, in Sextus’ account of Heraclitus at *M.* 7.131-132, arguably derived from Aenesidemus. The passage is discussed in the fifth chapter, where I also investigate the Empiricist idea of common reason.

¹¹⁹ The truth of which Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.8 speaks is to be read as a synonym of πίστις, as at *M.* 7.131 and 134.

¹²⁰ Hints at this interpretation are found in Bächli (2000), p. 43, who, however, does not pursue it.

¹²¹ The Greek reads: οἱ μὲν γὰρ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον λέγουσιν ὅτι τῶν φαινομένων διαφορὰν, καὶ φασὶ τούτων τὰ μὲν κοινῶς πᾶσι φαίνεσθαι τὰ δὲ ἰδίως τινί, ὧν ἀληθὴ μὲν εἶναι τὰ κοινῶς πᾶσι φαινόμενα, ψευδῆ δὲ τὰ μὴ τοιαῦτα. Hankinson (1995), p. 129 raises this objection against a counterfactual interpretation of Aenesidemus’ criterion.

However, in fact, most commentators have understood Aenesidemus' Heraclitus as committed to the idea that the conditions of truth set in his criterion are satisfiable. Some have therefore suggested that the reference is to the empirical truth of statements in our every-day life such as "It is day", upon which everybody agrees, and which the Sceptics themselves do not question.¹²² Others have interpreted Aenesidemus' criterion as a plainly dogmatic one, belonging to his alleged dogmatic phase.

Against the reading that the 'truth' to which Aenesidemus refers is other than that of 'dogmatic' statements concerning the properties of things, it can be said that the mere fact that Aenesidemus' Heraclitus is an entry of the *diaphonia* on truth, which covers the major dogmatic thinkers and schools, suggests that his criterion of truth is comparable with the others listed, at least in scope. True, Aenesidemus speaks of 'appearances' (τὰ φαινόμενα). However, the term is here a synonym of sense-objects (τὰ αἰσθητά). Therefore, there is little ground for postulating that the scope of Aenesidemus' truth καθ' Ἡράκλειτον is the non-dogmatic statements of the kind some have suggested. The topic is, rather, whether or not sense reports reveal us the properties of things.

On the other hand, against interpreting this criterion as a plainly dogmatic one, it can be objected that, had Sextus understood it as leading to the acknowledgement of the actual truth of some sensory data as against others, he would have presumably refuted it along with all other dogmatic notions of truth expounded at *M.* 8.4-10. Moreover, and more significantly, this line of interpretation requires the existence of a dogmatic phase in Aenesidemus' thought, for which there is no evidence.

I do believe that the truth to which Aenesidemus refers is comparable in scope with that of the dogmatic criteria expounded at 8.4-10, but I also believe that the conditions of truth which he has fixed are deliberately counterfactual. This criterion voices genuinely Sceptical ideas below the surface precisely in that it is equal, and yet opposite in result, to any dogmatic criterion. This interpretation becomes, I believe, compelling, if one bears in mind the Sextus report at *PH* I 210. We learn from this passage that Aenesidemus' Heraclitus is committed to the claim that one and the same thing has

¹²² Natorp (1884), pp. 97-103. This hypothesis has been recently resumed by Viano (1989), p. 40, who speaks of "cohérence empirique de perception". Gisela Striker too in private conversation has defended this interpretation.

opposite properties (τὸ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπάρχειν), a claim that Aenesidemus finds cognate with the Sceptical principle of conflicting appearances, based on the observation that one and the same thing displays opposite properties (τὸ τάναντία περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φαίνεται). If Aenesidemus understood Heraclitus in the light of the *diaphonia* motif, he can hardly have at the same time deemed the requirements of his criterion of universally agreed appearances to be satisfiable: this criterion fixes as a condition of truth that one object ought to appear to everybody in the same way, a condition which cannot but be counterfactual for whoever takes the opposite case to be the rule, as Heraclitus does for Aenesidemus.

However, on closer inspection, there may be something which does meet the requirement of Aenesidemus' criterion. This is the observation itself that external objects display conflicting appearances. This observation is not a sense-perceptual statement such as "honey tastes sweet" or "honey tastes bitter", which I have argued to be the primary scope of Aenesidemus' φαίνόμενον. Nonetheless, one may conjecture that Aenesidemus regarded it as having the same epistemic status as sense-perceptual statements on account of its empirical nature. It is understood as being a matter of empirical evidence at least by Sextus, who describes it as "a state of affairs which is experienced by all mankind" (πράγμα [...] πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὑποπίπτον),¹²³ and as a "common notion" (κοινὴ πρόληψις).¹²⁴ The echo here of Aenesidemus' κοινῶς πᾶσι φαίνόμενον is hardly accidental: Sextus is, I believe, picking up a motif of which Aenesidemus had already made use, and reversing it against Aenesidemus himself: *if it is true, as Aenesidemus maintains, that the principle of conflicting*

¹²³ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.211. Natorp (1884), p. 117 identifies the principle of conflicting appearances as a thought-object (νόησις). His ground is, it seems, the fact that theorising the principle of conflicting appearances requires some intellectual reworking beyond sense-perception. However, the scope of αἴσθησις, as understood in antiquity, goes beyond sense-perception (the case of the Epicureans is discussed by Striker (1996), p. 37; the case of the Empiricists is discussed in Frede (1990)). As a matter of fact, if the principle of conflicting appearances is a φαίνόμενον for Aenesidemus, as Natorp concedes, it is unlikely that Aenesidemus called it a νοούμενον, or νοητόν, at the same time.

¹²⁴ The relevant passage is quoted and discussed above ch. I.5. Von Arnim (1888), pp. 84-85 is the first to detect an echo to Aenesidemus' 'that-which-appears-to-us-all' in Sextus' presentation of the principle of conflicting appearances at *PH* 1.211. However, von Arnim's identification of Philo as a source on Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism led him to advance the further conjecture that Aenesidemus' that-which-appears-to-us-all is in fact the flux-motif, thus spoiling his initial intuition. This perhaps explains why no later commentator has rescued it.

appearances appears to us all, how can he appeal to it in order to vindicate a special relationship between Scepticism and Heracliteanism?

Is Sextus' criticism fair? If the principle of conflicting appearances is Aenesidemus' ground for associating Scepticism with the philosophy of Heraclitus, it cannot be the case that he identified the principle as a 'common appearance' agreed upon by everybody. Aenesidemus' claim that a privileged relationship exists between the Sceptics and Heraclitus, on account of their adoption of that principle, presupposes that only Heraclitus and the Sceptics share it. At most, Aenesidemus might have argued that anybody, if interrogated as to whether things appear in the same way to all, would have no choice but to answer "No", and hence would arrive at the principle of conflicting appearances. By contrast, Sextus presents this principle as if it were factually agreed upon by all mankind. In this way he distorts, I believe, Aenesidemus' original point. This distortion is a step of his argument: *everybody, not just Heraclitus, experiences the fact that one and the same object produces conflicting appearances; thus no privileged relationship can be established between the Sceptics and Heraclitus on this basis.* However, as I have already argued (ch. I.5), Sextus here is disingenuous. Positing that one and the same object evinces opposite properties is not just a matter of noticing that it may so occur. Both Heraclitus and the Sceptics rule out the possibility of deciding between conflicting appearances. Conflicting appearances remain just as credible, and are 'equipollent' in mainstream Sceptical jargon, and 'idiosyncratic' and 'not-true' for Aenesidemus' Heraclitus.

If I am right, we are facing the seemingly paradoxical situation that the principle of conflicting appearances, the one which makes the class of commonly agreed appearances empty, and thus everything false, is itself a commonly agreed appearance (at least virtually) and true. In this way, Aenesidemus might have intended to vindicate the truth of the foundation of Sceptical suspension of judgement, and to foist it onto his Heraclitus. This is certainly a different manoeuvre from 'epochizing' Sceptical arguments, as Sextus usually does, and yet it is consistent with Scepticism. Sextus himself at *M.* 8.479 claims that the Sceptical arguments supporting suspension of judgement are not themselves a subject of suspension, being endowed with a certain truth:

Many things are said which imply an exception (καθ' ὑπεξαίρεσιν); and just as we declare that Zeus is "the father of both gods and men" implying the exception of this god himself, so, also when we say that

no proof exists, we imply in this statement the exception of the argument which proves that proof does not exist.

As a matter of fact, any Sceptical principle is such as to raise the question of whether it is self-applicable or absolute, and each of these options incurs difficulties. Following the former option seems to undermine the strength of Sceptic arguments: *if not even the Sceptics themselves are committed to what they argue, how could this be equipollent to what all other philosophers maintain and agree on?* Following the latter option, by contrast, the Sceptics seem to drop their non-dogmatic stance, and veer towards so-called 'negative dogmatism', thus facing the charge of inconsistency. The danger of incurring this charge need not have bothered Aenesidemus when he was interpreting Heraclitus, and retrojecting a principle foundational to suspension of judgement onto him. However, Aenesidemus does appear to have *in propria persona* adopted a 'dogmatic negative', or, perhaps better, 'meta-dogmatic', stance in his Sceptical arguments as well.¹²⁵

II.3 *Heraclitus on Disagreement*

It is useful to investigate what may have suggested this interpretation of Heraclitus to Aenesidemus. Sextus *M.* 7.131-132 makes it clear that the attribution to Heraclitus of the claim that that-which-appears-to-us-all is true relies on the opening of his work (fr. 1):

Heraclitus then asserts that this common and divine Reason, by participation in which we become rational, is a criterion of truth. Hence, that-which-appears-to-us-all-in-common is trustworthy (for it is perceived by means of the common and divine Reason), but that which affects one person alone is, for the opposite reason, untrustworthy. Thus the man above-mentioned, pointing in a fashion to the surrounding air, declares at the beginning of his work *On Nature* that... [the quotation of fr. 1 follows].¹²⁶

For now, I shall not go into the details of this report, which echoes *M.* 8.8 closely, but also betrays a somewhat Stoic flavour, starting from

¹²⁵ See Phot. *Bibl.* 212 169b 21-26 and the remarks on it by Long and Sedley (1987) II, p. 472. On Aenesidemus' adoption of some form of negative dogmatism see Woodruff (1988), and, more recently, Bett (1997), pp. xix-xxxiii.

¹²⁶ τοῦτον δὴ τὸν κοινὸν λόγον καὶ θεῖον, καὶ οὐ κατὰ μετοχὴν γινόμεθα λογικοί, κριτήριον ἀληθείας φησὶν ὁ Ἡράκλειτος. ὅθεν τὸ μὲν κοινῇ πᾶσι φαινόμενον, τοῦτ' εἶναι πιστόν (τῷ κοινῷ γὰρ καὶ θεῷ λόγῳ λαμβάνεται), τὸ δὲ τινι μόνῳ προσπίπτον ἄπιστον ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν αἰτίαν. ἐναρχόμενος γοῦν τῶν Περὶ φύσεως ὁ προειρημένος ἀνὴρ, καὶ τρόπον τινὰ δεικνύς τὸ περιέχον, φησί· "λόγου τοῦδε ἐόντος ἄξυνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι κτλ".

the identification of Heraclitus' λόγος with a cosmic principle.¹²⁷ For my present purpose I shall content myself with observing that the truth to which partaking in Heraclitus' λόγος gives us access is a matter of common agreement and phenomenal. On the face of it, this reading finds little support in what Heraclitus himself says. But it is not impossible that someone might have arrived at it all the same. Heraclitus sharply distinguishes between his truth and the idiosyncratic beliefs (fr. 2: ἰδίαι φρονήσεις) of laymen, who are unable to go beyond their private experiences. The truth in question, however, does not involve any deeper, intellectual insight into the nature of things: human beings, Heraclitus urges in fr. 1, should have already understood it even before he explained it to them, by simply looking around. For the world of awake people is one and the same, and common to everybody (fr. 89). But laymen are blind and deaf regarding what lies in front of them, just as if they were asleep. Thus, Heraclitus' truth may well be described as having the epistemic status of a matter of experience and virtually agreeable by everybody.¹²⁸

But what is so apparent in our everyday life as to justify Heraclitus' claim concerning the self-evidence of his truth? The Sextus passage quoted above does not provide clue on the matter. Aenesidemus, I have argued, understood Heraclitus' truth as being the principle of conflicting appearances. Heraclitus for his part (fr. 1) suggests that his truth is to be sought in 'words' (ἔπεα) and 'deeds' (ἔργα) such as those he reviews in his book. As far as words are concerned, Heraclitus fr. 66 refers to such cases as that of βίος, which, depending on the accent, indicates either 'life' or 'death' (the bow being instrument of death). Within Heraclitus' realist attitude to language this acts as evidence for an underlying rule of nature, namely that one and the same object evinces opposite properties. There is no direct evidence that Aenesidemus resumed Heraclitus' etymological arguments in support of his interpretation that Heraclitus' truth is the principle of conflicting appearances. But the fact that at *M.* 8.8 he

¹²⁷ Theiler (1992), pp. 266-267 goes so far as to include it in his edition of Posidonius' fragments; see, however, my discussion below ch. V.2.

¹²⁸ True, Heraclitus Fr. 123 says that "nature loves to hide". But the content of this fragment does not pose a threat to the interpretation that Heraclitus' truth is phenomenal. It merely implies that our cognitive access to things is limited to their appearances, their inner constitution being hidden to us. Aenesidemus would have no difficulty in subscribing the idea. In the absence of any reference to this fragment, however, one may only speculate whether and how it might have contributed to his interpretation of Heraclitus.

appeals to the etymology of the Greek word for ‘truth’ in order to make the point that, for Heraclitus, only that-which-appears-to-us-all is true (ἀληθὲς φερωνύμως εἰρησθαι τὸ μὴ λήθον τὴν κοινὴν γνώμην) makes it tempting to think that he did.

As far as ‘facts’ are concerned, Heraclitus appeals to the case of sea water, which is drinkable to fish but not to men, and to wallowing in the mud, which is pleasant to pigs but unpleasant to humans. The relevant fragments (fr. 61 and 13) are without attribution quoted word for word by Sextus at *PH* 1 55-56, within his account of Aenesidemus’ first trope. This might be taken to suggest that Aenesidemus was acquainted with them, and that he understood them as supporting his argument in the trope. The idea, as one may assume Aenesidemus understood it, is that the conflicting impressions caused by the mud, and hence the opposite responses of pigs and humans towards it, merely express their own idiosyncratic attitudes. The truth is that the mud, as well as any other thing, is such that it should always produce conflicting impressions in different perceivers.

Aenesidemus could find further support for his interpretation, that the content of Heraclitus’ λόγος is the principle of conflicting appearances, in Heraclitus’ identification of ‘strife’ (πόλεμος) as the ratio of things,¹²⁹ and in the related claim that knowledge and wisdom amount to one’s acquaintance with this ratio.¹³⁰ One bears in mind that the terms πόλεμος and μάχη in Sceptical literature connote ‘disagreement’, likewise διαφωνία.

Thus, sense-reports conflict with each other; so do ideas. Nothing is agreed upon. This is Heraclitus’ ratio of things. Conflicting and opposite appearances of things (say, the pleasant or unpleasant feelings which the mud causes in Heraclitus, and the sweetness or bitterness of the honey in Aenesidemus) cannot be simultaneously true. The only truth, for Heraclitus, is conflict itself. Or at least Aenesidemus interpreted him in this way.

II.4 *The Opposites*

If Heraclitus’ *coincidentia oppositorum* lends itself to being interpreted in the light of the *diaphonia* motif, as I have argued, it also goes much

¹²⁹ Her. Fr. 80: εἰδέναι δὲ χρή τὸν πόλεμον ἔοντα κοινόν... καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ’ ἔριν καὶ χρεών; cf. Fr. 1: γινόμενὸν πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε κτλ.

¹³⁰ Her. Fr. 80, quoted above; see also Fr. 41: “One is wisdom: knowing the γνώμη which governs everything through everything”.

further: Heraclitus posits that opposites not only appear, but also have a certain ‘reality’ in one and the same object. Or at least this is the way in which Sextus, after Aristotle,¹³¹ formulates Heraclitus’ point of view at *PH* 1.210-212: τὰ ἐναντία ὑπάρχει περὶ τὸ αὐτό.

Heraclitus’ claim, as reported by Sextus *PH* 1.210, echoes that of Protagoras, that “conflicting appearances are both real and equally true”,¹³² which, as we have seen, the Sceptics regard as nonsense. Heraclitus is found endorsing Protagoras’ point of view also at *PH* 2.63: “from the fact that honey tastes bitter to some and sweet to others Democritus concluded that it is in fact neither bitter nor sweet, Heraclitus, by contrast, that it is both”.¹³³ This certainly makes a substantial difference between the Sceptics and Heraclitus on the matter.

Sextus, however, does not put forward this representation of Heraclitus as an objection against Aenesidemus. Rather, he attributes it to Aenesidemus in the first place:

Aenesidemus maintained that Scepticism is a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus, since to hold that opposite properties ‘appear’ in one and the same object precedes holding that they really ‘exist’ in it.

This attribution is puzzling, because Aenesidemus has Heraclitus deny truth to conflicting appearances, and, of course, oppositions are an instance of conflicting appearances. As a matter of fact, Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus is very different from Plato’s and Aristotle’s: this latter regards conflicting appearances as being both true, Aenesidemus’ own, by contrast, establishes the condition that, in order to be true, appearances should agree with each other.

Thus, if the possibility can be ruled out that, for Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus, opposites ‘really exist’ in the sense that they are ‘true’ (ὑπάρχοντα = ἀληθῆ), one may wonder whether Aenesidemus might have thought to rescue Heraclitus’ ὑπαρξίς claim, with granting reality to appearances, and yet denying them truth, that is, with distinguishing between their ‘reality’ and ‘truth’. That Aenesidemus may have made this distinction is suggested by *M.* 8.8-9:

¹³¹ Arist. *Metaph.* 1005b 27; 1011b 7 and *passim*: τὰναντία ἅμα ὑπάρχειν τῷ αὐτῷ.

¹³² See Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.18: τὰ μαχόμενα συνυπάρχει καὶ ἐπ’ ἴσης ἀληθῆ καθίσταται.

¹³³ ἐκ τοῦ τὸ μέλι τοῖσδε μὲν πικρόν, τοῖσδε δὲ γλυκὺ φαίνεσθαι ὁ μὲν Δημόκριτος ἔφη μήτε γλυκὺ αὐτὸ εἶναι μήτε πικρόν, ὁ δὲ Ἡράκλειτος ἀμφοτέρω.

Aenesidemus interpreting Heraclitus and Epicurus both alike fell back on sense-objects (τὰ αἰσθητά), but differed as to details. Aenesidemus maintains that there is a difference in appearances (τὰ φαινόμενα): some of them appear to us all in common, and others are idiosyncratic; the former are true, and the latter are not so [...]. Epicurus, by contrast, maintains that whatever one senses is both true and existent, because there is no difference between saying that a thing is 'true' and saying that it is 'real' (τὰ αἰσθητά πάντα ἔλεγεν ἀληθῆ καὶ ὄντα. οὐ διήνεγκε γὰρ ἀληθὲς εἶναι τι λέγειν ἢ ὑπάρχον).

Sextus does not explicitly attribute to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus the claim that sense-objects are real. However, if Aenesidemus' Heraclitus admits only sense-objects to the competition for being true, it is obvious that he made a distinction between sense- and thought-objects in the first place. Sextus' associating him with Epicurus makes it tempting to think that Aenesidemus' ground for his distinction was reality or otherwise. As I understand the passage, both Aenesidemus' Heraclitus and Epicurus ascribe reality (ὑπαρξίς) to sense-objects, and, conversely, ἀνυπαρξία to thought-objects. They disagree, rather, as to the epistemological implications of ascribing reality to sense-objects. For Aenesidemus' Heraclitus not all sense-objects are true, but only those which are agreed upon by everybody. Epicurus, by contrast, believes that, if one concedes that sense-objects are real, it thereby follows that they are true.

It is also possible to arrive at identifying Aenesidemus' Heraclitus as Epicurus' target by exclusion. The run of the report let the reader understand that the identification between 'real' and 'true' is a matter of disagreement between Epicurus and someone previously listed. The *diaphonia* at *M.* 8.4-10 covers Democritus and Plato, Aenesidemus' Heraclitus and Epicurus, and finally the Stoics. Democritus and Plato, though reaching conclusions regarding the reality of sense-objects which are opposite to Epicurus', are committed to the idea that truth is co-extensive with reality, likewise Epicurus.¹³⁴ The Stoics for their part make the point, which is irrelevant to Epicurus' identification between truth and reality, that truth assessment applies

¹³⁴ Democritus says that μηδὲν αἰσθητὸν ὑποκεῖσθαι φύσει, Plato that γίνεσθαι μὲν αἰεὶ τὰ αἰσθητά, μηδέποτε δὲ εἶναι, thus both denying the very reality of the contents of sensation. The way in which Sextus rewords their point of view at *M.* 8.56 confirms this: οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Δημόκριτον καὶ Πλάτωνα ἀθετοῦντες μὲν τὰς αἰσθήσεις, ἀναιροῦντες δὲ τὰ αἰσθητά κτλ (see also *M.* 6.53: οἱ γέ τοι περὶ τὸν Δημόκριτον καὶ Πλάτωνα πᾶν αἰσθητὸν ἀναιροῦντες κτλ). The same consideration applies to Xenias and Monimus, who come earlier in the *diaphonia*, forming the entry of those who maintain that everything is false, on the basis that (Monimus): τύφον τὰ πάντα, ὅπερ οἰησίς ἐστι τῶν οὐκ ὄντων ὡς ὄντων.

to the propositional content of sense-reports, not to sense-reports as such. Thus, Aenesidemus' Heraclitus is the only possible target of Epicurus.

Of course, it would be anachronistic to think that Epicurus' identification between reality and truth purported to challenge the epistemology which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus centuries later. One may suppose that the sequence goes the other way round, and that Aenesidemus distinguished between 'real' and 'true' in order to claim that the reality of sense-objects does not secure Epicurus' additional claim that they are true. An anti-Epicurean purpose is by no means surprising: Aenesidemus is also found polemicising with them in the eight tropes, as reported by Sextus at *PH* 1.185.

If we are to trace the historical background of Aenesidemus' and Epicurus' disagreement on the truth and reality of sense-objects, we do have a text available which may give us some glimpse into it. This is Herculanean papyrus 1012, containing, it seems, Demetrius Laco's *Περὶ τινῶν ἀλόγως Ἐπικούρου προστετριμμένων*. Col. 74 Crön. (= Deichgräber T. 164) contains the argument of a certain Philion, usually deemed to be a Sceptic,¹³⁵ against Epicurus' claim that αἰσθητά are true. In this context we find the reference to their being ὄντα and ἀληθῆ. The text is fragmentary, and does not enable us to understand the line of thought. Above all, it is not clear which part of the argument belongs to whom, i.e. whether it is Demetrius who makes the point that sense-objects are real in order to substantiate Epicurus' claim that they are true, or whether it is 'Philion' who suggests that the only thing one can say is that sense-objects are real, but that this does not assure their being true. However the text is read, and for all that the identity of 'Philion' is controversial, one may at least say that the relationship between the reality and the truth of sense-objects has been a matter under dispute between Epicureans and some of their opponents well before Aenesidemus. This is, perhaps, the background to his attribution of reality to sense-objects alone, which, as I have argued, underpins his 'Heraclitean' criterion of truth.

¹³⁵ It has been suggested that the name is a corruption for 'Philinos', the founder of the Empiricist school of medicine (Crönert (1906), p. 119; Gigante (1981), pp. 170-175; Deichgräber (1930), p.255; or for 'Philon', one of Pyrrho's pupils mentioned by Diogenes Laertius (De Falco (1923), p. 52). Puglia (1988), p. 312, retains the given name, and hypothesises that this Philion is not Demetrius' opponent, but a fellow Epicurean.

Thus, Heraclitus' tenet at *PH* 1.210 that τὰ ἐναντία ὑπάρχει περὶ τὸ αὐτό lends itself to two different interpretations, depending on which meaning one attributes to the verb ὑπάρχειν: one interpretation commits Heraclitus to the claim that all sensory data, no matter if they conflict with each other, correspond to an external state of affairs, and therefore are true; on the other reading, the reference is to a reality which merely applies to the content of our sensory data, and which therefore is not incompatible with the Sceptical claim that inner properties of the external object are hidden. Sextus at *PH* 1.210-212 does not make it clear how to read Heraclitus' ὑπάρχειν. However, if Aenesidemus' point was to make Scepticism a path towards Heraclitus, and hence the Sceptical φαίνεσθαι explicative of Heraclitus' ὑπάρχειν, the second reading seems to me to fit Aenesidemus' strategy better.

I shall try to spell out exactly what this reality comprises, by expanding the scope of my investigation to some genuinely Sceptical material attributable to Aenesidemus, in which the idea is echoed. Before doing so, however, I shall tackle a possible objection to my proposed interpretation. The objection follows this line: the hypothesis that for Aenesidemus' Heraclitus sense-objects *are* (τὰ αἰσθητά ὑπάρχει), meaning that what-one-senses has some reality of its own, is fair enough; but how can this idea be reconciled with Heraclitus' actual claim, as reported at *PH* 1.210, that τὰναντία ὑπάρχειν περὶ τὸ αὐτό? This phrasing is usually understood as equivalent to the construction of the verb ὑπάρχειν governing the dative, which has the technical meaning 'to inhere in', and which presupposes a reference to the inner nature of the external object. However, it may not be an accident that Aenesidemus adopts the phrasing ὑπάρχειν περὶ + accusative instead. This construction recalls, and is modelled on, the expression τὰναντία φαίνεται περὶ τὸ αὐτό. I suspect that the meaning of περὶ τὸ αὐτό in Heraclitus' ὑπάρχειν statement is also modelled on that which it has in the Sceptics' φαίνεσθαι statement: "Opposite properties appear/are real *as regards* one and the same object", in agreement with the standard meaning of the preposition. The idea might be that there is something sweet (or bitter) *about* the honey; that is, that sweetness (or bitterness) are not empty affections, but necessary responses of our organism when sensing honey. On this account, the specification περὶ τὸ αὐτό in Heraclitus' ὑπάρχειν statement at *PH* 1.210 takes a much looser meaning than is usually thought, and one which does not commit Aenesidemus' Heraclitus to any claim

concerning the correspondence between what-one-senses and an external state of affairs, but only to the commonsensical idea that there is something in the outside world which is responsible for what-one-senses.

A closer inspection of other occurrences of the verb ὑπάρχειν lends support to this interpretation. The verb ὑπάρχειν construed with περί + accusative is rare in Sextus, and in its very few occurrences it never has the technical meaning ‘to inhere in’. A similar consideration applies to Aristotle: when the inherence of attributes to substances is under discussion, he invariably uses ὑπάρχειν governing the dative, as he does for presenting Heraclitus’ thesis: τὰναντία ἅμα ὑπάρχει τῷ αὐτῷ.¹³⁶ By contrast, when Aristotle construes the verb ὑπάρχειν with περί + accusative, it either has a spatial reference,¹³⁷ or it takes a very loose meaning.¹³⁸ Thus, I suspect that Aenesidemus’ rendering of Heraclitus’ *coincidentia oppositorum* principle is not a stylistic *variatio*. It is a deliberate manoeuvre, aimed at reconciling Heraclitus’ reality claim with Scepticism, passing through a ‘phenomenalist’ meaning of ὑπάρχειν which the construction with περί + accusative allows, and which I shall now investigate in more depth.

¹³⁶ See above p. 60 n. 131.

¹³⁷ Something ‘is located around’, ‘in the area of’, something else; this meaning occurs in Aristotle’s biological treatises.

¹³⁸ This is found in passages such as *Metaph.* 1060a 10, where wisdom is presented as ὑπάρχειν περί τὰ ὄντα, or *Phys.* 196b 21, where τὸ ἐνεκά του is said to ὑπάρχειν περί certain natural processes.

CHAPTER THREE

SCEPTICISM

III.1 *Reality*

It has been my suggestion that the criterion of truth which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus restates in fictitiously positive terms, as if it enabled us to access something true, the Sceptical leitmotif of *diaphonia*, that is, the universal disagreement which pertains to any potential object of knowledge, thus bringing about suspension of judgement. However, there is a difference between the criterion which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus and the mainstream Sceptical usage of the *diaphonia* motif. Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' criterion covers sense-objects alone, whereas the *diaphonia* motif usually makes no distinction between sense- and thought-objects.¹³⁹ Aenesidemus' restriction of his 'Heraclitean' criterion to sense-objects alone is even more puzzling, in view of the fact that the truth he professes to allow them, given the counterfactual conditions he has fixed, is merely hypothetical, and sense-objects turn out to be just as untrustworthy as thought-objects. It has been my suggestion that Aenesidemus' Heraclitus wants to make this distinction all the same because, in his view, sense-objects are 'real' (ὕπαρχοντα), and have a different ontological status from thought-objects. But what sort of 'reality' has Aenesidemus in mind?

The verb ὑπάρχειν, once again referred to sense-objects, and not opposed to φαίνεσθαι, also occurs in genuinely Sceptical material. Here we find a refutative *topos* which rests upon the distinction between things which are 'in virtue of a difference' (κατὰ διαφοράν), and relative things (τὰ πρὸς τι πῶς ἔχοντα, sometimes shortened to τὰ

¹³⁹ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.8: "Ἔστι δὲ ἡ σκεπτικὴ δύναμις ἀντιθετικὴ φαινόμενων τε καὶ νοουμένων καθ' οἷονδήποτε τρόπον, ἀφ' ἧς ἐρχόμεθα διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις πράγμασι καὶ λόγοις ἰσοσθένειαν εἰς ἐποχὴν. Missing agreement makes sense- and thought-objects alike untrustworthy at *M.* 8.362: εἰ μὲν γὰρ σύμφωνα εὐρίσκετο τὰ αἰσθητὰ τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς καὶ τὰ νοητὰ τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἐναλλάξ, ἴσως ἂν παρεχωροῦμεν αὐτὰ τοιαῦτα τυγχάνειν ὅποια φαίνεται· νῦν δὲ ἐν τῇ συγκρίσει ἀνεπικρίτον εὐρίσκοντες μάχην κτλ. The idea that sense- and thought-objects are equally in disagreement is also at *PH* 1.186: τὰ φαινόμενα καὶ τὰ ἀδηλα πάντα διαπεφώνηται.

πρός τι).¹⁴⁰ Πρός τι πῶς ἔχοντα are relational descriptions such as father/son, left/right, upside/down, more/less sweet, but also, as Sextus argues, intellectual notions such as that of ‘sign’, which are merely thinkable (ἐπινοητά), but not real (μὴ ὑπάρχοντα),¹⁴¹ and thus totally unreliable. Diog. L. at 9.88 describes things πρὸς τι as πρὸς τὴν διάνοιαν, that is, ‘mind-dependent’.

Things κατὰ διαφορὰν, by contrast, are ‘really existent’ (ὑπάρχοντα).¹⁴² This class of things includes, and apparently finishes with, τὰ αἰσθητά, referring to the qualities that our senses perceive, rather than the external object to which they hypothetically belong (say, not honey as such, but its sweetness or bitterness).¹⁴³ The Stoics, to whom the Sceptics owe the division between τὰ κατὰ διαφορὰν and τὰ πρὸς τι πῶς ἔχοντα, invariably exemplify the former by referring to sense-qualities, whereas external objects as such fall into the class of things καθ’ αὐτά.¹⁴⁴ There is no evidence that for the Sceptics things κατὰ διαφορὰν count as καθ’ αὐτά. As a matter of fact, if they owe their idea

¹⁴⁰ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.161: Τῶν οὖν ὄντων, φασὶν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως, τὰ μὲν ἐστὶ κατὰ διαφορὰν, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τι πῶς ἔχοντα. καὶ κατὰ διαφορὰν μὲν ὅποσα κατ’ ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν καὶ ἀπολύτως νοεῖται, οἷον λευκὸν μέλαν, γλυκὺ πικρὸν, πᾶν τὸ τοῦτοις παραπλήσιον κτλ. *M.* 8.38: τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς οὐχ ὁμοίως πάντας κινεῖ, ἀλλὰ ταῦτόν ὡς μὲν πρὸς τόνδε ἀληθὲς εἶναι φαίνεται, ὡς δὲ πρὸς ἕτερον ψεῦδος. οὐκ ἄρα τῶν κατὰ διαφορὰν καὶ φύσει ὑποκειμένων ἐστὶ τὸ ἀληθές. εἰ δὲ τῶν πρὸς τι ἔστιν [τὸ ἀληθές], ἐπεὶ τὰ πρὸς τι νοεῖται μόνον, οὐχὶ δὲ καὶ ὑπάρχει, πάντως καὶ τάληθες ἐπινοητόν ἐσται μόνον, οὐχ ὑπάρξει δὲ κτλ. *M.* 8.206-207: τὸ τε αἰσθητόν, ἢ αἰσθητόν ἐστι, κατὰ διαφορὰν νοεῖται, οἷον τὸ λευκόν, τὸ μέλαν, γλυκὺ πικρὸν, πᾶν τὸ τοιούτωδες. τὸ δὲ σημεῖον, ἢ σημεῖον ἐστὶ, τῶν πρὸς τι καθέστηκεν· κατὰ γὰρ τὴν ὡς πρὸς τὸ σημειωτὸν σχέσιν ἐθεωρεῖτο. οὐκ ἄρα τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐστὶ τὸ σημεῖον. καὶ μὴ πᾶν αἰσθητόν, ὡς ἡ κλῆσις παρίστησιν, αἰσθήσει ληπτὸν ἐστὶ, τὸ δὲ σημεῖον ὡς σημεῖον οὐκ αἰσθήσει λαμβάνεται ἀλλὰ διανοίᾳ.

¹⁴¹ The distinction recalls the Stoic one between ὑπάρχειν and ὑφιστάναι (on which see Goldschmidt (1972) and Graeser (1971)). However, the question whether the twodistinctions relate to each other lies outside the scope of our investigation here.

¹⁴² Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.453-456.

¹⁴³ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.206: τὸ τε αἰσθητόν, ἢ αἰσθητόν ἐστι, κατὰ διαφορὰν νοεῖται, οἷον τὸ λευκόν, τὸ μέλαν, γλυκὺ πικρὸν, πᾶν τὸ τοιούτωδες. *M.* 8.161: κατὰ διαφορὰν ὅποσα κατ’ ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν καὶ ἀπολύτως νοεῖται, οἷον λευκὸν μέλαν, γλυκὺ πικρὸν, πᾶν τὸ τοῦτοις παραπλήσιον. See also Diog. L. 9.96: τὸ αἰσθητόν κοινόν ἐστι καὶ τῶν κατὰ διαφορὰν.

¹⁴⁴ On the Stoic notion of relatives see Simpl., in *Arist. Cat.*, CGA 8.165ff. = *SVF* 2.403. Although Simplicius’ account lends itself to more than one interpretation, the scheme appears to be the following: on the one hand are things καθ’ αὐτά, on the other are things πρὸς τι, which are in turn divided into things κατὰ διαφορὰν and things πρὸς τι πῶς ἔχοντα (see Isnardi Parente (1986), and (1990)). The way in which these two latter classes are described is remarkably close to that of the Sceptics, although the Stoics also count ‘disposition’, ‘science’ and ‘sensation’ among things κατὰ διαφορὰν.

of κατὰ διαφοράν to the Stoics, it will entail a certain degree of relativity, as it does in the Stoic division, in which both τὰ κατὰ διαφοράν and τὰ πρὸς τι πὼς ἔχοντα are sub-classes of τὰ πρὸς τι.¹⁴⁵ The hypothesis that Aenesidemus and his followers differentiated between different degrees, or kinds, of relativity gains support from the fact that Sextus does so.¹⁴⁶ The class of things καθ' αὐτά is missing in the Sceptic classification, presumably because they thought everything to be relative,¹⁴⁷ but the matter lies beyond the scope of our investigation.

¹⁴⁵ Mignucci (1988), p. 147 n. 11 claims that things καθ' αὐτά themselves are κατὰ διαφοράν, but the text does not seem to support this reading: ἄλλη τῶν καθ' αὐτά ἔννοια καὶ ἄλλη τῶν κατὰ διαφοράν [...] τοῖς μὲν καθ' αὐτά συνυπάρχει τὰ κατὰ διαφοράν· καὶ γὰρ τὰ καθ' αὐτά ὄντα διαφορὰς ἔχει τινὰς ὥσπερ τὸ λευκὸν καὶ μέλαν· οὐ μέντοι τοῖς κατὰ διαφοράν τὰ καθ' αὐτά συνυπάρχει. Things καθ' αὐτά are said to “have certain differences” (meaning that things κατὰ διαφοράν such as black and white inhere in them), but nothing more than this. Things κατὰ διαφοράν are καθ' αὐτά in the Pythagoreans' tripartition of beings at *M.* 10.263. But the Sceptics are certainly not drawing on it, as the Pythagoreans' classification includes three classes of beings: τὰ κατὰ διαφοράν, τὰ κατὰ ἐναντίωσιν, τὰ πρὸς τι (contrary to the Sceptics' at *M.* 8.163: τρίτη γὰρ μεταξὺ τούτων ἰδέα τῶν πραγμάτων οὐκ ἔστιν), and the actual reference of the Pythagoreans' τὰ κατὰ διαφοράν are, instead of sense-qualities, “man, horse, plant, earth, water, air, fire”. Things κατὰ διαφοράν are admittedly said to ἀπολύτως νοεῖσθαι by the Sceptics at *M.* 8.161, but this is a mere synonym of κατ' ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν νοεῖσθαι (*M.* 8.162: ἀπολελυμένως λαμβανόμενα, τούτεστι κατ' ἰδίαν), a description which the Stoics already applied to things κατὰ διαφοράν, and which therefore does not entail their being καθ' αὐτά. No other occurrence of κατὰ διαφοράν as a technical description of things is found in Greek literature, except in Stoic, Sceptic, and Pythagorean material.

¹⁴⁶ See Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.136: “This statement [that all things are relative] is twofold, implying, firstly, relation to the thing which judges [...] and, in a second sense, relation to the accompanying percepts, for instance the right side in relation to the left”. See also Anon. *In Th.* 62.48-63.4: “The right is right in relation to the left, the similar is similar to what is similar, just as the big is big in relation to the small. However, in a different way the Pyrrhonists maintain that everything is relative”.

¹⁴⁷ External objects are, of course, the most obvious candidates for being described as καθ' αὐτά. But the Sceptics refrain from giving them any place in their classification of beings. Perhaps external objects for the Sceptics have a merely hypothetical existence as the sum of certain sense-qualities. Elsewhere Sextus mentions honey and fire as instances of αἰσθητά (or φαινόμενα), in one case even contrasting these αἰσθητά to the πάθη τῶν αἰσθήσεων (Sext. Emp. *PH* 2.74). The reference of the term αἰσθητόν is in effect ambiguous: sense-qualities are of course the proper content of sensation, but, to the extent that the external object is conceived of as an aggregate of them, this too can be presented as αἰσθητόν. The Sceptics hypothetically adopt such a notion of external object, and then refute it, by appealing to the conflicting ways in which external objects impress our senses. At this stage, the external object ceases to be an aggregate of sense-qualities, and becomes an obscure entity which lies beyond sense-perception, thus being sharply distinguished from its appearances, and no longer an αἰσθητόν (Stough (1969), pp. 81-83). Sextus will indicate this entity as τὸ ἐκτὸς ὑποκείμενον μέλι or τὸ ἐκτὸς ὑποκείμενον πῦρ (*M.* 7.365), apparently being unhappy with the simple name of

The usage of the verb *ὑπάρχειν* within the division between things *κατὰ διαφορὰν* and things *πρὸς τι* may give us a glimpse into the relationship between *φαίνεσθαι* and *ὑπάρχειν* in Aenesidemus' Heraclitus. If for the Sceptics only sense-objects, as things *κατὰ διαφορὰν*, have reality, and if Aenesidemus' *φαινόμενα*, which provide the scope of his Heraclitean criterion, are sense-objects, then there is no cause for surprise if he associates the Sceptical principle, i.e. that one and the same thing produces opposite appearances in different perceivers, with Heraclitus' own principle, i.e. that the opposite properties displayed by one and the same thing both are real:¹⁴⁸ *φαίνεσθαι* and *ὑπάρχειν* are not, of course, synonyms, but they come to have one and the same reference within a sensualist framework, such as that of Aenesidemus, which exhausts the reality of things into the way in which they affect our senses.¹⁴⁹

A possible parallel for the idea that I attribute to Aenesidemus is found in Cyrenaic material. Sextus at *M.* 6.53 reports that for the Cyrenaics "only the content of our sensations is real, and nothing else" (*μόνα τὰ πάθη ὑπάρχειν, ἄλλο δὲ οὐδέν*). A way of reconciling this testimony with the rest of the tradition, which provides evidence that the Cyrenaics do not deny the existence of external objects, is to think that *ὑπάρχειν* here does not refer to unqualified reality, but specifically to sensorial reality, which applies to sense-objects alone. The fact that external objects, the "things productive of feelings", are nowhere described as *ὑπαρκτά* by the Cyrenaics, lends support to this hypothesis.

The case of the Cyrenaics provides a useful parallel, because the Cyrenaics, like Aenesidemus, deny that we have insight into the inner properties of things and do not question the existence of external objects. Thus, the report on the Cyrenaics at Sextus *M.* 6.53 provides

the thing. Thus, the Sceptics, following *συνήθεια*, do sometimes speak of honey, fire and the like as if they were *αἰσθητά*, but the names of these objects stand in fact for those of the sense-qualities which hypothetically inhere in them. A telling piece of evidence for this is at Hippolytus, *Philos. prooem.* I 23, p. 572 Diels (= Pyrrho T. 82 DC): "Other people [the Sceptics] put forward the formula *οὐ μᾶλλον*, saying that fire is fire no more than non-fire. However, they do not refer to the essence of fire, but to its qualities", that is, its being caustic, warm, and the like (*οἱ δὲ τὸ οὐ μᾶλλον προσέθεσαν λέγοντες οὐ μᾶλλον τὸ πῦρ πῦρ εἶναι ἢ ἄλλο τι. οὐ μέντοι ἀπεφήναντο αὐτὸ τὸ τί ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τοιόνδε*). This approach of course agrees with the Sceptics' phenomenalism (on the Hippolytus passage see also Conche (1994), pp. 235-6). See, however, Burnyeat (1983b), p. 145 n. 27.

¹⁴⁸ Sext. Emp. *PH* I.210.

¹⁴⁹ I here agree with Krüger (1924), p. 167, although his argument is speculative.

two important confirmations, that in the terminology and in the thought pattern of that time the attribution of reality solely to sense-objects: 1) is not incompatible with denying cognitive access to the external object; 2) does not conflict with the assumption, common to all Sceptical and Scepticising philosophies in antiquity, that external objects (τὰ ὑποκείμενα) have some existence of their own. In what follows I shall investigate other features of the special status which Aenesidemus attributed to sense-objects, so as to proceed further in our assessment of what their reality comprises.

III.2 *Nature*

The Sceptics associated the reality of things κατὰ διαφοράν with their causing the same impression in all those who are in the same physical disposition:

What exists ‘in virtue of a difference’ (κατὰ διαφοράν) and by nature moves those who are in a like disposition in the same way — the hot, for instance, is not hot to one man and cold to another, but hot to all those who are in the same disposition.¹⁵⁰

On this view, all healthy people perceive the honey as sweet, and all jaundiced people perceive it as bitter, and both opposite appearances of honey have a certain degree of reality as a sensory datum, depending on the different disposition (διάθεσις) of the ones and the others, that is, depending on their differently disposed sense-apparatus.

The motif of the agreement with which sense-objects impress us turns up again in a body of Sceptical arguments, the archetype of which goes back to Aenesidemus.¹⁵¹ Various classes of thought-objects (νοούμενα), ranging from the hidden causes of which observational data are alleged to be ‘signs’, up to the definitions of what the good lies in, are dismissed as ‘idiosyncratic’. If two people are both healthy or both jaundiced, and taste some honey, they perceive it in the same way. This is evidence that the way in which honey appears

¹⁵⁰ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.37: τὸ κατὰ διαφοράν καὶ φύσει ὑποκείμενον ὡσαύτως τοὺς ὁμοίως διακειμένους κινεῖ, οἷον τὸ θερμὸν οὐ πρὸς ἄλλον μὲν ἐστὶ θερμὸν πρὸς ἄλλον δὲ ψυχρόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ὡσαύτως διακειμένους θερμόν. Τὸ κατὰ διαφοράν is also characterised as κοινόν at Diog. L. 9.96 (above quoted n. 143).

¹⁵¹ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.215-216 ascribes one version of the argument to Aenesidemus. On Aenesidemus’ authorship of this body of arguments see Caujolle Zazlawsky (1990), p. 146 and Decleva Caizzi (1996), who also addresses the problem of the unspoken assumptions on which the argument relies.

evinces a certain regularity and universality.¹⁵² By contrast, the very same people, independently of their physical disposition, will disagree as regards theoretical issues such as whether or not motion is a sign of void, and the like.¹⁵³ Thus, thought-objects are purely subjective and arbitrary.¹⁵⁴

What characterises this body of arguments is the fact that the disagreement which covers thought-objects is invariably contrasted to the agreement which allegedly covers sense-objects, expressed in terms of πάντας ὁμοίως κινεῖν, ὁμοίως (or παραπλησίως) πᾶσι φαίνεσθαι, κοινῶς τε καὶ συμφώνως λαμβάνεσθαι and the like. Thus, sense-objects provide a paradigm of the way in which thought-objects also should work, and the fact that the latter follow different rules is picked up as evidence that they lack reality, this being identifiable, it appears, with sensorial reality.

This body of arguments may seem somewhat suspicious because, of course, we do not want a Sceptic to ascribe inherence in the external object, and hence truth, to appearances. Thus, a widely held view of Sceptical interpretation suggests that the Sceptics adopt the refutative *topos* in question for the sake of argument.¹⁵⁵ It may be so. However, an important qualification is almost regularly added, which gives us a clue as to how to interpret the *topos* in such a way as to fit a Sceptical framework: sense-objects are agreed upon, but only by those who are *in the same disposition* (πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ὁμοίως διακειμένους). This is enough to grant to sense-objects a different

¹⁵² Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.191: τὸ αἰσθητὸν ἐπ' ἴσης πάντας κινεῖ.

¹⁵³ See *M.* 8.240-241, where Sextus comments on Aenesidemus' argument quoted at 234: ὅτι γὰρ τὰ φαινόμενα ἐπ' ἴσης φαίνεται τοῖς ἀπαρποδίστους ἔχουσι τὰς αἰσθήσεις, συμφανές· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλοις ἄλλως τὸ λευκὸν φαίνεται, οὐδὲ ἄλλοις ἄλλως τὸ μέλαν, οὐδὲ διαφερόντως τὸ γλυκύ, ἀλλ' ὁμοίως πάντας κινεῖ. εἰ δὴ ταῦτα ἐπ' ἴσης πᾶσι φαίνεται καὶ ἐνδεικτικὴν ἔχει δύναμιν τῶν ἀδήλων, ἀνάγκη καὶ τὰ ἀδηλα ἐπ' ἴσης πᾶσι προσπίπτειν. [...] οὐχὶ δέ γε τοῦτο· οὐ γὰρ πάντες ὡσαύτως τὰ ἀδηλα γινώσκουσι, καίπερ κατ' ἴσον τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ἐγκυροῦντες, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν οὐδ' εἰς ἔννοιαν αὐτῶν ἔρχονται, οἱ δὲ ἔρχονται μὲν, εἰς ποικιλίαν δὲ καὶ πολυτρόπους καὶ μαχομένους ὑποσύρονται ἀποφάσεις. ἀκόλουθον ἄρα μὴ αἰσθητὰ λέγειν τὰ σημεῖα, ἵνα μὴ τοῦθ' ἡμῖν τὸ ἄτοπον ἔπηται.

¹⁵⁴ Sextus at *M.* 8.44-45 provides us with a telling instance of the pair 'idiosyncratic' (ἴδιον) and 'universally agreed' (κοινόν) at work when thought-objects are under discussion. The issue is whether one arrives at truth by means of intellect. If this were the case, Sextus argues, at least some intellectual truths would be agreed upon by everybody. But thought-objects are never agreed upon. If so, intellectual truth may only be 'private', that is, to one person or shared by a minority of people. Still, to the extent that it remains controversial (μάχιμον), it is untrustworthy.

¹⁵⁵ See, most recently, Hankinson (1995), pp. 268-272.

ontological status from thought-objects, in terms of *ὑπάρχειν* and being *κατὰ διαφορὰν*. But, apart from that, does it also secure that external objects indeed are as they appear to us? In other words: if honey tastes sweet to healthy people, does this secure the conclusion that honey is truly sweet in its own nature? Expressions such as that at *PH* 3.179: “fire, which heats by nature, appears to all as heating [...] and all things which affect us by nature affect in the same way all those who are (as they say) naturally disposed”¹⁵⁶ might have been taken as bringing about this un-Sceptical conclusion. However, the clause *ὡς φασίν* suggests that Sextus is here adopting the notion of ‘natural disposition’ (*ἔχειν κατὰ φύσιν*) from the language of his opponents, and does not commit himself to any distinction between those who are disposed according to nature, and those who are not. Moreover, Aenesidemus in the original formulation of the *συμφωνία*-argument does not refer to “those who are naturally disposed”, but, more neutrally, to “those who are in the same disposition”, independently of whether this is a ‘normal’ one.¹⁵⁷ On closer inspection, not even the adverbial dative *φύσει* in statements such as: “fire heats by nature”, “honey sweetens by nature”, takes any dogmatic meaning. Its precise meaning can be recovered, I believe, by considering the cases of those who, being in ‘abnormal’ dispositions, are chilled by fire or taste honey as bitter. Shall we say, in their regard, that honey *naturally* tastes bitter to the jaundiced person in the same way as it naturally tastes sweet to the healthy one, or is an opposition implied between the naturalness with which honey tastes sweet to the healthy person and the unnaturalness with which it tastes bitter to the jaundiced?

The first reading is, I believe, preferable: the opposition between sense- and thought-objects rests upon the idea that the former, as

¹⁵⁶ Τὸ πῦρ φύσει ἀλεαῖνον πᾶσι φαίνεται ἀλεαντικόν [...] καὶ πάντα τὰ φύσει κινοῦντα ὁμοίως πάντας κινεῖ τοὺς κατὰ φύσιν, ὡς φασίν, ἔχοντας.

¹⁵⁷ Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.215, 234. See also *M.* 8.37-38: τὸ κατὰ διαφορὰν καὶ φύσει ὑποκείμενον ὡσάυτως τοὺς ὁμοίως διακειμένους κινεῖ, οἷον τὸ θερμὸν οὐ πρὸς ἄλλον μὲν ἔστι θερμὸν πρὸς ἄλλον δὲ ψυχρόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ὡσάυτως διακειμένους θερμόν, and *M.* 8.189: τὸ πῦρ αἰσθητὸν ὃν πάντας τοὺς καίεσθαι δυναμένους καίει καὶ ἡ χιὼν αἰσθητὴ καθεστηκυῖα πάντας τοὺς ψύχεσθαι δυναμένους ψύχει. Formulations such as that at *M.* 11.69: τὸ πῦρ, φύσει ἀλεαντικόν καθεστὼς, πάντας ἀλεαίνει, which echoes *PH* 3.179, but does not even limit the warming effect of fire to those who are naturally disposed, expanding it instead to all people alike (cf. Diog. L. 9.101), are to be read as a later simplification of Aenesidemus’ original argument for rhetorical purposes. Note, however, that when Sextus at *M.* 11.76 sums up this argument, he will nonetheless insert the clause which limits the warmth of fire to ‘those whose senses are not impeded’, thus showing himself to consider the warmth of fire relative to the different disposition of the perceivers.

against the latter, always produce the same impressions in those who are in the same disposition, that is, that sense-objects always prove a certain regularity in the way they affects our senses. If the reference of the clause ‘by nature’ is to this regularity, then the the clause applies to any disposition whatsoever, and whatever appearance a sense-object takes, this is ‘by nature’: *it is natural* that honey shall taste bitter to the jaundiced. Thus, the dative φύσει (‘by nature’) here has the usual meaning of the adverb φυσικῶς (‘naturally’), and describes what takes place following some given ‘physical’ rules, and cannot be otherwise.

This reading gains further support from a survey of Aenesidemus’ notion of naturalness, as it emerges from accounts of the tropes. In Diogenes we find the claim that “not even mad people are in a state which is contrary to nature”, the way in which they sense things being just as natural as that in which normal people do.¹⁵⁸ A similar point is also found in Sextus: “just as healthy persons are in a state that is natural for the healthy, but unnatural for the sick, so too those who are sick are in a state that is unnatural for the healthy but natural for the sick people”.¹⁵⁹

Thus, we have an additional information on Aenesidemus’ appearances: they are agreed upon by those who are in the same disposition, because they are ‘by nature’. They are the outcome of a physiological process, sensation, which follows given laws. Sensation is not an arbitrary product of mind. It is entirely passive: it just happens, without any danger of intellectual falsification of data. The argument, which sounds irremediably positivistic, may well have an Empiricist pedigree. However, one cannot rule out the possibility of Cyrenaic and/or Epicurean influences.

III.3 *Sensation*

Sensation is argued by Sextus to be ‘natural’ also in his discussion of the criterion at *M.* 7.31-35 (= *PH* 2.15). Here we find a distinction between the criterion of life and the criterion of truth, followed by a tripartition of this latter on the basis of the word ‘criterion’ being used ‘as everybody does’ (κοινῶς), ‘in a special meaning’ (ιδίως), or in ‘the most special meaning’ (ἰδιαίτατα).¹⁶⁰ As an example of the

¹⁵⁸ Diog. Laert. 9.82.

¹⁵⁹ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.103.

¹⁶⁰ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.31: Τὸ κριτήριον τοίνυν περὶ οὗ ὁ λόγος ἐστὶν λέγεται

criterion being referred to 'as everybody does', Sextus gives the senses, which have a 'natural constitution' (φυσικὴ κατασκευή), and which, therefore, Sextus describes as 'natural' (φυσικά) criteria. By contrast, neither the criterion 'in a special meaning', which Sextus also calls 'technical', nor the criterion 'in the most special meaning', which he also calls 'logical', are by nature. The former criterion are the conventional standards which we use for measuring things. The latter criterion are our means for accessing truth, as theorised by dogmatic philosophers.

The knowledge that the senses give us involves some 'apprehension' (κατάληψις) of things,¹⁶¹ and yet not of their inner nature¹⁶². On this basis, Sextus couples the 'natural' criterion with the 'technical' one, and places them in the class of 'life' criteria (βιωτικά κριτήρια). His subsequent refutation will cover 'logical' criteria alone.¹⁶³

Although Sextus presents life criteria as a sub-category of the criterion of truth, and although he had distinguished 'criterion of truth' and 'criterion of life' (τὸ ὃ προσέχοντες βιοῦμεν), life criteria have the same reference and even name as the criterion of life. This suggests that Sextus is here juxtaposing two independent accounts of the criterion: one distinguishes between life and truth; the other divides the criterion (without any indication as to whether truth or

τριχῶς, κοινῶς ἰδίως ἰδιαίτατα, κοινῶς μὲν πᾶν μέτρον καταλήψεως, καθ' ὃ σημερινόν καὶ τὰ φυσικὰ οὕτω προσαγορεύεται κριτήρια, ὥς ὅρασις· ἰδίως δὲ πᾶν μέτρον καταλήψεως τεχνικὸν ὡς κανὼν καὶ διαβήτη· ἰδιαίτατα δὲ πᾶν μέτρον καταλήψεως ἀδήλου πράγματος, καθ' ὃ τὰ μὲν βιωτικά οὐ λέγεται κριτήρια, μόνα δὲ τὰ λογικά καὶ ἅπερ οἱ δογματικοὶ φέρουσι πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας κρίσιν.

¹⁶¹ There may be an echo to Philo's apprehension, as referred to by Phot. *Bibl.* 170a 23-38 and Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.235. However, Philo's apprehension covers sense- and thought-objects alike. The Sceptics' 'natural criteria' are the senses alone. The Cyrenaic apprehension (Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.194) provides a closer parallel. Aenesidemus himself at Phot. *Bibl.* 212 169b 41-170a 3 seems to allow the possibility of some 'apprehension', or at least is ambiguous on the matter: οὐδεὶς αὐτῶν [τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πύρρωνος] τὸ παράπαν οὔτε ἀκατάληπτα πάντα εἴρηκεν οὔτε καταληπτά, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν μᾶλλον τοιάδε ἢ τοιάδε, ἢ τότε μὲν τοιαῦτα τότε δὲ οὐ τοιαῦτα, ἢ ὃ μὲν τοιαῦτα ὃ δὲ οὐ τοιαῦτα ὃ δ' οὐδ' ὅλως ὄντα.

¹⁶² Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.34: μόνα δὲ τὰ λογικά καὶ ἅπερ οἱ δογματικοὶ τῶν φιλοσόφων παρεισάγουσι πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εὔρεσιν.

¹⁶³ Sextus at *M.* 7.35 expresses his intention of 'investigating' life criteria too, subsequently to the logical ones (πρόκειται πάλιν τὸ σκέπτεσθαι προηγουμένως μὲν περὶ τοῦ λογικοῦ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις θρυλουμένου, κατ' ἐπακολούθημα δὲ καὶ περὶ ἐκάστου τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον). However, he will not do so in his argument. He does challenge the senses at *PH* 2.49-56, but only as revealing the nature of external objects.

life is the reference) into three kinds: ‘natural’, ‘technical’, and ‘logical’:¹⁶⁴

scheme (a) (<i>M.</i> 7.29-30 = <i>PH</i> 2.14)	scheme (b) (<i>M.</i> 7.31-35 = <i>PH</i> 2.15)
– criterion of life: appearances	– natural criteria: the senses – conventional units of measure of things
– criterion of truth	– logical criteria

The adjective ‘logical’ (λογικός) echoes one of the two horns of the Sceptical opposition between λόγος and φαινόμενον, as found at Anonymus *In Theaetetum*. 61.15-22.¹⁶⁵ This opposition dates back to the Empiricist physicians: Polybius the historian provides evidence that they already use that adjective as early as the second century BC, that is, well before Aenesidemus, in order to describe the aitiological speculations of their medical opponents.¹⁶⁶ Accordingly, they describe their opponents as ‘rationalist’ (οἱ λογικοί). Sextus’ precise wording τὰ λογικὰ κριτήρια καὶ ἅπερ οἱ δογματικοὶ τῶν φιλοσόφων κτλ suggests that the original reference of his ‘logical criteria’ was to criteria put forwards by ‘rationalist’ physicians, and that only at a second stage (καὶ ἅπερ) do they also cover philosophical criteria, on the assumption that rationalism and dogmatism are one and the same thing.

The notion of natural criterion also occurs in Galen, yet with remarkable differences. First of all, his natural criteria include not only the senses, but also reasoning (*PHP* 9.1.11-13 and *Hipp off. med.* 18b.658-659). This agrees with Galen’s ‘mixed’ theory of knowledge, which relies on both sense-perception and reasoning. Likewise Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Arist. metaph. comm.* 317, counts the senses, but also scientific and philosophical axioms, among natural criteria. Galen himself at *Hipp de off. med.* 18b.658 tells us that the identity of

¹⁶⁴ I here agree with Striker (1996) p. 71. Brennan’s attempt at reconciling the two accounts (Brennan (2000) pp. 65-71) is ingenious but not entirely persuasive.

¹⁶⁵ κατὰ γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα [τὸν Πύρρωνα] οὔτε ὁ λόγος κριτήριον [...] ἀλλ’ ὅτι νῦν αὐτῷ φαίνεται.

¹⁶⁶ *Hist.* 12.25d2-6 = *Herophilus* T. V.56 von Staden. The Empiricists’ medicine is for its part by definition ἄλογος.

natural criteria was a matter of controversy, each school invoking 'nature' for its own purposes.

Secondly, Galen's natural criteria reveal an external state of affairs (*Hipp. off. med.* 18b.657 *fin.*: διαγνωστικά τῶν ἐκτὸς ὑποκειμένων). Galen does not mention any 'logical' criterion as such, since his natural criteria also cover Sextus' logical ones, so much so that at *PHP* 9.7.3-4 Galen presents the Stoic apprehensive impression and the Academic persuasive one as reformulations of universally agreed natural criteria.¹⁶⁷ Hence he represents the Sceptics plainly as rejecting natural criteria (*Hipp. off. med.* 18b.658). Galen, however, is wrong: the Sceptics distinguished between logical and natural criteria, precisely in order to qualify their rejection of the former, and justify why they admit sensory data, but not rational inferences from them.

In spite of these discrepancies between Galen and the Sceptics, Galen tells us something which can be regarded as the common way of describing the natural criteria, independently of their content: "Do all we men possess any natural criteria which are common? For we should not define as 'natural' what is not common to all."¹⁶⁸ Natural criteria are, thus, by definition shared by all mankind, and therefore the knowledge that they give us is something universally agreed upon (or alleged as such). For "what clearly falls under the natural criteria is never in dispute, but dispute arises about the things that fall under these criteria not at all or obscurely" (*PHP* 9.2.22). Likewise the Sceptics describe sensory data, the unique content of their natural criteria, as universally agreed (though merely by "those who are equally disposed"), and Alexander presents sense-perception and common notions as being natural criteria (*De mixtione* 218.20; 220.25; see also 215.32).

On this basis Galen at *PHP* 9.7.5 attacks those philosophers engaged in defending their own idiosyncratic views, instead of sticking to what is universally agreed upon:

That the first criterion must be trustworthy without proof is admitted by all, but not all conceive that it must be natural and common to all

¹⁶⁷ 'The judgement of these things is referred to impression which, as the philosophers of the New Academy say, is not only persuasive, but also viewed from all sides and unshaken, or which, in Chrysippus' words, is apprehended; or according to the belief that all men share, the judgement is referred to clear sensation and thoughts. These expressions are thought to differ from one another, but if you examine them more carefully, their meaning is the same'.

¹⁶⁸ *PHP* 9.1.11: ἄρ' οὖν ἔχομεν τινα φυσικά κριτήρια κοινὰ πάντες ἄνθρωποι; οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδέχεται φυσικά λέγειν τὰ μὴ κοινὰ πάντων ὄντα.

mankind. The majority at times choose to stand by their own assumptions, instead of by that which clearly appears to all humans in common, and they pretend to have placed firm trust in explanations that they themselves give at random, in order to establish some doctrine of their own sect; and again, certain others put up with voluntary falsehood simply for the sake of standing against the views of their opponents. For those who proclaim themselves followers of a sect have as their aim the defence of all its tenets, even if these tenets have no necessary logical relation to its basic teachings. This is the case with the doctrine about the ruling part of the soul.¹⁶⁹

Galen condenses in this passage many motifs which are also found in Sceptical material: the requirement that one should stand by “that which clearly appears to us all” (τὸ κοινῇ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐναργῶς φαινόμενον) echoes Aenesidemus’ ‘Heraclitean’ criterion of truth, at least in wording; the criticisms that Galen addresses against idiosyncratic philosophers closely echo the content of some of Aenesidemus’ tropes against the aetiologists.¹⁷⁰ Galen and the Sceptics have, of course, different motivations and philosophical allegiances, and yet the way in which Galen frames the argument gives us a glimpse how these ideas (universality requirement, natural criteria etc.) related to each other in the thought pattern of that time.

Galen’s idea that the senses and reason alike are by nature also turns up at Sextus *PH* 1.23-24, where Sextus expounds the Sceptics’

¹⁶⁹ ὅτι μὲν γὰρ τὸ πρῶτον κριτήριον ἀναποδείκτως εἶναι δεῖ πιστόν, ὡμολόγηται πᾶσιν, οὐ μὴν ὅτι γε φυσικὸν εἶναι δεῖ τοῦτο καὶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων κοινὸν ἐννοοῦσιν ἅπαντες, καὶ οἱ πλεῖστοι προκρίνουσιν ἐνίοτε τοῦ κοινῇ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐναργῶς φαινόμενου τὸ τῇ ἐαυτῶν ὑπολήψει ἐμμένειν καὶ προσποιοῦνται πεπιστευκέναι βεβαίως οἷς αὐτοὶ λέγουσιν εἰκὴ ἔνεκα τοῦ κατασκευάζειν τι δόγμα τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐαυτῶν αἰρέσεως, ὥσπερ γε πάλιν ἕτεροὶ τινες εἰς τὸ διαβάλλειν τι τῶν ἑτεροδόξων ὑπομένουσιν ἐκουσίως ψεύδεσθαι. τοῖς γὰρ ἐαυτοὺς ἀπὸ τινος αἰρέσεως ἀναγορεύσασιν ἀγωνίζεσθαι πρόκειται περὶ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν αἵρεσιν, εἰ καὶ μηδεμίαν ἀναγκαίαν ἀκολουθίαν ἔχει πρὸς τὴν στοιχείωσιν, ὥσπερ ἀμέλει κατὰ τοῦ περὶ ψυχῆς ἡγεμονικοῦ δόγματος.

¹⁷⁰ See *PH* 1.180-186. On standing by one’s own idiosyncratic hypotheses, instead of following what is commonly agreed, see the fifth trope, καθ’ ὃν πάντες κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας τῶν στοιχείων ὑποθέσεις ἀλλ’ οὐ κατὰ τινος κοινὰς καὶ ὁμολογουμένας ἐφόδους αἰτιολογοῦσιν. On the inconsistency between the basic teachings of a philosophical school and the detailed explanations that its followers put forward, see the seventh trope, καθ’ ὃν πολλὰκις ἀποδιδόασιν αἰτίας οὐ μόνον τοῖς φαινομένοις ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς ἰδίαις ὑποθέσεσι μαχομένας. Galen’s reference to explanations given ‘at random’ may be a misunderstanding of the content of the third trope, καθ’ ὃν τῶν τεταγμένως γινομένων αἰτίας ἀποδιδόασιν οὐδεμίαν τάξιν ἐπιφαινούσας. In the same way the reference to false explanations given on purpose for the sake of polemics may be drawing on the eighth trope, καθ’ ὃν πολλὰκις τὰ μὲν φωρατὰ ταῖς ἰδίαις ὑποθέσεσι παραλαμβάνουσιν, τὰ δὲ ἀντιπίπτοντα καὶ τὴν ἴσην ἔχοντα πιθανότητα παραπέμπουσιν.

criterion of life according to schema (a), saying that we humans are “naturally sensitive and thoughtful” (φυσικῶς αἰσθητικοὶ καὶ νοητικοί). The adverb φυσικῶς here undergoes a subtle and yet crucial shift of reference as against the other Sceptical material we have been considering so far. For what is ‘by nature’ here is not the content itself of our thoughts, but merely the fact that we think. Everybody, even a hard-line Empiricist, would agree that we happen to have thoughts, and, as long as this happens, it proceeds from the way in which we are constructed. However, this is a completely different ‘naturalness’ from the one which is elsewhere ascribed to sense-objects, and which involves the content itself of that-which-one-senses.

Sextus at *PH* 1.23-24 skips the difference, coupling thinking to perceiving as regards their naturalness. This agrees with the expansion of the range of the phenomenal to intellectual affections, which, as we saw, distinguishes Sextus’ phenomenalism from Aenesidemus’ own. Sextus’ way of putting the matter here, however, is incompatible with the argument based on the dichotomy between sense-objects (which are common, real, and by nature) and thought-objects (which are idiosyncratic, un-real, and arbitrary). Accordingly, Sextus himself at *M.* 8.216 warns the reader that Aenesidemus’ argument requires that by φαινόμενα one understands αἰσθητά in order to work, and always illustrates it by appealing to sense-objects.

The argument based on agreement also occurs at Polystratus *De contemptu* 21-28 (pp. 120-126 Indelli), where it is attributed to certain unnamed philosophers who want to abolish ethics. Here we find almost all the elements of the Sceptics’ usage of the agreement argument in their embryonic form. On the one hand are objects such as stones, on the other are moral notions such as good and evil: the former appear to everybody in the same way (ταῦτα πᾶσιν τὰ αὐτά) and are by nature (φύσει), the latter are relative (πρός τι) and conventional (νόμῳ); moreover, the former are really existent (ὑπάρχειν), the latter are merely thought but not real.¹⁷¹ In reply to these people, Polystratus, a follower of Epicurus who lived in the third century BC, contends that even sense-objects, agreed by his opponents to be real, prove a certain relativity. Thus, not even moral values can be dismissed on the basis of their being relative. As we saw, the Sceptics too are willing to admit that everything is relative, except

¹⁷¹ On this classification of beings see Isnardi Parente (1971).

that they differentiate between two kinds of relativity, thus overcoming Polystratus' objection.¹⁷²

III.4 *Medical Empiricism*

Sextus appeals to the dichotomy between sense- and thought-objects in order to make the point that, whatever thought-object is under discussion, it is unreliable. He never tells us, though, whether and under what conditions sense-objects are reliable: he does claim that they are 'real' and 'by nature', but he never applies to them any adjective with a definite epistemological import, such as ἀληθής or πιστός. As a matter of fact, Sextus appears to make use of this dichotomy always and only as a refutative tool against philosophical notions, and never addresses the positive implication of the agreement which he ascribes to sense-objects. He is not interested in this side of the question, thus giving the impression that he adopts the *topos* merely for the sake of the argument.¹⁷³

However, the agreement motif also occurs in Empiricist material, and here it no longer serves as a refutative tool, but has a positive meaning of its own, acting as the foundation for ἱστορία, which is a cornerstone, together with direct inspection (αὐτοψία), of the Empiricist theory of science, covering the whole body of observations and reports made by earlier physicians regarding the effect of drugs and the treatment of diseases, on which the Empiricist doctor is to rely in his practice. The relevant passage is at Galen, *Subfiguratio empirica* ch. 8, pp. 67-69 Deichgräber. It is a long quotation of Menodotus, a leading figure of the Empiricist school in the early second century AD.

¹⁷² I disagree with Striker (1996), p. 131: "with Polystratus' distinctions once established, the relativity argument would seem to have lost much of its force. If the Pyrrhonists still went on using it, they were indeed using premises that should have been obsolete by the time of Aenesidemus". A similar point is also found in Annas and Barnes (1985), p. 138.

¹⁷³ In support of this interpretation is also the fact that Sextus is usually found casting doubt on the ὑπάρχειν of sense-qualities in the external object. It must be stressed once again, however, that the reality and naturalness which he ascribes to sensory data in this body of arguments do not refer to an external state of affairs. Thus, the attribution of the argument to Aenesidemus does not conflict with the fact that this latter refrains from asserting the being or not-being of things at Phot. *Bibl.* 212 170a: καὶ οὐδ' ἀληθινὸν οὐδὲ ψεῦδος, οὐδὲ πιθανὸν οὐδ' ἀπίθανον οὐδ' ὄν οὐδὲ μὴ ὄν, where the target is the Stoic idea that the contents of *phantasiai kateleptikai* inhere in the *phantaston*: καταληπτικὴ φαντασία δέ ἐστιν ἡ ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον.

If all authors agree that, say, mace (a drug extracted from the bark of the walnut tree) has a retentive power, shall we trust them or not? Menodotus leaves no room for doubt: “I state that we should trust those who agree in this way”. One may wonder whether this rule also applies to thought-objects. But Menodotus has no doubts in this regard either:

I state that we should trust those who agree in this way, as long as our discussion concerns things that can be seen. For agreements concerning things that cannot be seen may be very widespread; yet they are not supported by everybody who writes on the subject. As a matter of fact, even if one were to grant that it is not ruled out that agreements of this latter kind could ever occur, the Empiricist will have no share in it anyway. By contrast, whatever agreements come about among people concerning things which can be seen, these other agreements are to be trusted in life.¹⁷⁴

Thus, agreement is impossible in the case of thought-objects, that is, theoretical issues such as the question whether there are indivisible bodies or whether matter is continuous. But even if agreements of this kind should ever come about, Menodotus would not trust them anyway. His requirement is not agreement as such. It is that things be observable. Being agreed upon is a consequence. For the authors’ consensus concerning the properties of a certain drug proceeds from the agreement, the self-consistency, that the drug, as well as any other sense-object, evinces. The Empiricists do not rule out the possibility of inaccurate sense-reports, and yet “they say there is undecidable disagreement about things that cannot be seen, but not about things that can be seen; for there each thing, having appeared as it is, bears witness to those who are right, and refutes those who are wrong”.¹⁷⁵

The conclusion may sound irremediably dogmatic: is Menodotus claiming that sensory data give us cognitive access to the nature of things?

¹⁷⁴ *Ego quidem dico, quoniam credendum est eis qui ita concordant. dico autem ita, cum sermo fuerit de sensibilibus. nam concordiae quae de immanifestis sunt maxime quidem neque consistentiam habent circa omnes quicumque scribunt de ipsis. si vero et concesserit aliquis non esse aliquando impossibile consistere talem concordiam, absistet et de hac empiricus. quaecumque vero concordiae fiunt de sensibilibus rebus in omnibus hominibus, fideles secundum vitam sunt.* A similar point is also found at Gal. Sect. intr. I 78-9 ch. 5 (cf. Frede (1985) pp. 9-10).

¹⁷⁵ Gal. Sect. intr. I 79 K: ἀνεπίκριτον δὲ τὴν περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων ἀνομολογίαν εἶναι φασιν, οὐ τὴν περὶ τῶν φαινομένων. ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ἕκαστον φανέν οἷόν ἐστι μαρτυρεῖ μὲν τοῖς ἀληθεύουσιν, ἐξελέγχει δὲ τοὺς ψευδομένους.

Some people maintain that an agreement which is free from doubt is a sign of truth. But those who rely, as we do, on epilogism, that is, an account of things as they appear, cannot talk in this way without qualification. We should say, rather, that it is merely a matter of experience of those who agree with each other concerning things that are true according to the evidence. Thus, if somebody said that agreement is the sign of a true report as far as observation is concerned, he would be making an empirical statement. If, on the other hand, one were to say this with reference to the nature of the external object, he would be making theoretical speculation instead.¹⁷⁶

This Latin version, the only one available, is rather involved, and Menodotus' argument remains somewhat unclear. However, Latin *observatio* probably translates τήρησις, that is, the yielding to sensory data that Sextus invokes as a standard for everyday life.¹⁷⁷ Menodotus goes so far as to describe sensory data as true. He adds, however, that the truth in question does *not* concern the inner nature of things (*ipsa natura rei*). This qualification is a very important one. It suggests that, for Menodotus, not only theoretical speculations, but also sensory data are subject to doubt, if the inner nature of external objects is in question. The Empiricist is happy to concede that, say, mace causes retention, but he does not commit himself to any assertion as regards its essence: "that drugs have powers [...] scarcely anyone will dispute, but as to their essence, some suppose it to be unknowable - namely the Sceptics and among the doctors those called Empiricists".¹⁷⁸ Here lies the difference between a phenomenalist sensualism, such as that of the Empiricists, and a dogmatic one, such as that of Epicurus.¹⁷⁹

Menodotus takes it for granted that there is a gap between sensory data and inner properties of external objects, and that this gap cannot be bridged, no matter whether or not there is agreement. He does not address the question of why being agreed upon is not sufficient to grant sensory data *unqualified* truth. If mace, when given

¹⁷⁶ *Sunt enim aliqui qui dicunt ita, quoniam ea quae absque suspitione concordia signum est veritatis rei; sed non est ita dicendum simpliciter ei qui colit epilogismum, qui est sermo eorum quae apparent, sed quoniam in experientia habitum est a concordantibus adinvicem de omnibus quae evidenter sunt vera. si igitur dixerit aliquis sicut ab observatione signum esse concordiam verae historiae, empiricam faciet iudicationem; si vero sicut ab ipsa natura rei, logicam.* On epilogism see below ch. V.4.

¹⁷⁷ Sext. Emp. PH 1.23; 2.246; 254; 3.235.

¹⁷⁸ Gal. *Simpl. med.* 9.380-381: τὸ μὲν οὖν εἶναι τινα δύναμιν [...] σχεδὸν οὐδεὶς ἀμφισβητήσει. τίς δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία τῆς δυνάμεως ταύτης, ἐνιοὶ μὲν ἀγνωστον ὑπέλαβον, ὥσπερ οἱ τε σκεπτικοὶ φιλόσοφοι καὶ τῶν ἱατρῶν οἱ κληθέντες ἐμπειρικοί.

¹⁷⁹ I here disagree with Allen (1993) p. 653, who attributes to the Empiricists unqualified trust in sensory data.

to humans, invariably proves to be retentive, why should one refrain from asserting that it is retentive in its own nature? Perhaps because mace is not in fact *invariably* retentive. For not all authors agree on this and similar matters. It is not only a question of some authors being less accurate than others. It is also the fact that people in an 'abnormal' disposition may make an exception to the rule, and that mace may not produce the same effect with all animal species.¹⁸⁰ The usual case with humans is enough for life (*secundum vitam*) and medical practice,¹⁸¹ but it is unsufficient when it comes to adjudicating the inner nature of external objects.

Thus, the idea that sensory data (φαινόμενα or αἰσθητά) are the subject of virtual agreement is not an idiosyncratic interpretation of Heraclitus, but an integral part of Aenesidemus' philosophical system, and one which finds echoes in both Empiricist and Sceptical literature. Differences in formulation and employment should not lead us to miss the fact that it is one and the same conceptual framework in operation, which is shared between Aenesidemus, his Heraclitus and the Empiricists.

Since the Empiricist school of medicine pre-existed Aenesidemus, one may hypothesise that he owes the agreement motif, at least in its embryonic form, to the Empiricist doctors. Admittedly, we have little evidence as regards the epistemology of the Empiricists preceding Aenesidemus. Nonetheless, we at least know that the idea that the doctor should rely on other doctors' reports, of which the agreement requirement is a corollary, is a part of Empiricist epistemology from the outset.

However, there seems to be an alternative and more intriguing candidate for being Aenesidemus' source of inspiration. *Consensus omnium* is found invoked as a sign of truth in contemporary

¹⁸⁰ Menodotus ap. Galen gives Crete and Sicily being islands as instances of commonly agreed and true sense-reports. However, he is here conflating two different issues: it is one thing to admit the existence as such of external objects, another thing to assess their properties. Agreement concerning the mere existence of external objects appears to be unconditional (note, however, the hyper-sceptical attitude of certain ἀγροικοπύρρονες at Gal. *Diff Puls* 8.711), while agreement concerning their properties is conditional.

¹⁸¹ See [Gal.] *Def* 19.353 (p. 90 19-20 D.): ἐστὶν ἡ ἐμπειρικὴ αἵρεσις τήρησις τῶν πλειστάκις κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ ὡσαύτως ὁραμένων = [Sor.] *Quaest.* p. 253 (p. 90, 24-25 D.): *Emperica secta est de his rebus quae saepe et simul et similiter eventiunt vel visuntur observatio*. Empiricists will therefore employ Aristotle's notion of ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ in order to qualify the extent to which empirical laws are effective; see [Gal.] *Def* 19.354 (p. 126 11-18 D).

philosophical literature.¹⁸² In particular, Tarrant points to Philo of Larissa and his idea of agreement and self-evidence as the background to Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' epistemology.¹⁸³ The hypothesis is suggestive, because it enables us to connect Aenesidemus to his putative school, the Academy. However, Aenesidemus' membership to the Academy is in effect a mere conjecture. Moreover, if one is to recover the pedigree of Aenesidemus' idea of universal agreement, one cannot stop at superficial similarities, but should consider the core of his position instead. This is the fact that Aenesidemus' agreement covers sense-objects alone. No such restriction is found in the argument *e consensu omnium*, as employed in philosophical and rhetorical literature of the time. Thus, Aenesidemus' usage of the *topos* evinces a substantial difference in relation to Philo and the Academics, and one which suggests that his source of inspiration is to be sought elsewhere.

III.5 *The Tropes*

While a deeper inspection of later Sceptical material has enabled us to account for Aenesidemus' criterion of truth καθ' Ἡράκλειτον in such a way as to fit his Scepticism, a correct understanding of the meaning of this criterion has given us in turn the chance to re-evaluate certain aspects of Sceptical doctrine, and to grasp certain assumptions on which it relies. In what follows I shall expand the scope of my investigation to Aenesidemus' ten tropes, his most important contribution to Scepticism. For my present purposes, I shall focus on echoes of the two motifs which characterise Aenesidemus' epistemology καθ' Ἡράκλειτον (the universal agreement requirement, and the restriction of truth to sense-objects), and shall review relevant texts from ancient sources. The first text I shall discuss is Diog. L. 9.78 *fin.*-79 *init.*:

- (i) With regard to the contradictions which come to light in inquiries, they [the Sceptics] first set forth the conditions on the basis of which things persuade, and then, on the basis of the same conditions, they prove things to be untrustworthy. (ii) For they say that things persuade if they are in agreement according to sensation, if they never or rarely vary, if they are usual and disposed by law, if they are pleasant,

¹⁸² On the argument *e consensu omnium*, which, in effect, is primarily a rhetorical *topos*, see Öhler (1961), Schian (1973), Obbink (1992).

¹⁸³ See Tarrant (1981).

and if they arouse wonder. (iii) Hence they showed that the persuasiveness of the things opposite to the persuasive ones is in the fact the same. (iv) The *aporiai* that they raised concerning the consistency of our appearances and judgements have been arranged under ten modes, according to which external objects appear to vary. He sets forth the ten modes as follows.¹⁸⁴

Aenesidemus is the philosopher whom Diogenes has mentioned in the last line of the preceding passage (78 *init.*): καθά φησιν Αἰνησιδημος ἐν τῇ εἰς τὰ Πυρρώνεια Ὑποτυπώσει, and this licenses the suspicion that Aenesidemus is Diogenes' source here as well. To clear up any doubt, Diogenes at (iv) brings into the picture the ten tropes, which, as Aristocles *apud* Eus. *PE* 14.18.11 tells us, Aenesidemus set forth in a work entitled Ὑποτύψεις, that is, precisely the work mentioned by Diogenes at 78 *init.* as his source. Thus, it is plausible to assume that in the whole of paragraphs 78-79 Diogenes draws on Aenesidemus' introduction to the tropes.¹⁸⁵

Unfortunately, Diogenes' rendering of the argument is condensed, and this makes it difficult for us to recover the original line of thought. It is clear that the four requirements (τρόποι) listed at (ii) are not parts of the ten tropes, which are referred to at (iv), and reported by Diogenes in what follows. So, what do they amount to? It

¹⁸⁴ (i) Πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἐν ταῖς σκέψεσιν ἀντιθέσεις προαποδεικνύντες καθ' οὓς τρόπους πείθει τὰ πράγματα, κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀνῆρουν τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν πίστιν. (ii) πείθειν γὰρ τὰ τε κατ'αἴσθησιν συμφώνως ἔχοντα καὶ τὰ μηδέποτε ἢ σπανίως γοῦν μεταπίπτοντα τὰ τε συνήθη καὶ τὰ νόμοις διεσταλμένα καὶ τὰ τέρποντα καὶ τὰ θαυμαζόμενα. (iii) ἐδείκνυσαν οὖν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων τοῖς πείθουσιν ἴσας τὰς πιθανότητας. (iv) αἱ δ' ἀπορίαι κατὰ τὰς συμφωνίας τῶν φαινομένων ἢ νοουμένων, ἃς ἀπεδίδον, ἦσαν κατὰ δέκα τρόπους, καθ' οὓς τὰ ὑποκείμενα παραλλάττοντα ἐφαίνετο. τούτους δὲ τοὺς δέκα τρόπους τίθησιν κτλ. I translate τρόποι at (i) and at (iv) as 'conditions' and 'headings' respectively, as in the latter case the term specifically refers to the tropes, in the former case it is not used in this technical sense.

¹⁸⁵ I thus agree with Burnyeat (1983), p. 143, and Tarrant (1985), p. 25, who provides further arguments in support of this hypothesis. Diogenes does use the third person plural (προαποδεικνύντες... ἀνῆρουν...), but this is hardly evidence for his not drawing on Aenesidemus, as Aenesidemus himself used to speak in this way on behalf of οἱ Πυρρώνειοι (see Photius' résumé of Aenesidemus' *Pyrrhonist Discourses*). Aenesidemus is also likely to be the implied subject of the last sentence: τούτους δὲ τοὺς δέκα τρόπους τίθησιν. True, a different arrangement of the tropes from the one Diogenes follows is ascribed to Aenesidemus at 87. But the report at 87 is probably a later gloss superimposed onto the original text of his source by Diogenes (see above n. 34). Aristocles' listing of Aenesidemus' tropes at Eus. *PE* 14.18.11-12 presupposes yet another arrangement of them. Such disagreement among the sources is due to the fact that the tropes used to be reported under the name of Aenesidemus (as Sextus himself does at *M.* 7.345), independently of whether that was indeed Aenesidemus' own formulation and arrangement of them.

is possible that Aenesidemus refers to the conditions on the basis of which things are to be trusted in the view of his dogmatic opponents. On this interpretation, Aenesidemus is arguing that these requirements do not provide a reliable standard to assess when to trust things, and indeed that there is no such standard.¹⁸⁶

However, if the Diogenes' source is Aenesidemus' introduction to the tropes, these requirements will have to be read in the light of the actual discussion that we find in the tropes, and which I shall briefly review. Pleasure and displeasure naturally direct our choice and avoidance, but each of us is pleased by different things, and nothing is pleasant rather than unpleasant in its own nature.¹⁸⁷ A similar line of argument applies to the case of laws and habits: we follow the laws and the habits of the place where we live, but different laws and habits are effective elsewhere, hence no law or habit is universally agreed upon and by nature.¹⁸⁸ Likewise, wonder is a subjective feeling which is not shared by everybody, and the very same person who has felt wonder once will not have the same feeling after he has become acquainted with the thing which aroused wonder in the first place.¹⁸⁹ If Aenesidemus' arguments in the ten tropes offer a reliable sample to help us understand how the requirements listed at (ii) are meant to work, then the point that Aenesidemus is making is not precisely that being pleasant, disposed by law etc. do not provide a reliable standard to adjudicate things. Rather, the point is that nothing meets these standards in such a way as to be universally recognisable as pleasant, legal etc. Hence the conclusion is arrived at that the appearance of something being pleasant and its contrary are equally persuasive, and therefore that nothing is pleasant rather than unpleasant in its own nature.

A counterfactual reading of Diogenes' requirements is strengthened by a closer examination of the first two listed at (ii). Here Aenesidemus claims that those things persuade which are 'in agreement according to sensation', and those which never or rarely vary. At (iii) he goes on to urge that the persuasiveness of the things opposite to the persuasive ones is in the fact the same. Here it cannot be the case that, in Aenesidemus' view, what is universally agreed and its contrary are equally trustworthy, e.g. that if everybody agrees that

¹⁸⁶ Thus Burnyeat (1983), pp. 122-125.

¹⁸⁷ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.87; Diog. L. 9.79 *fin.*-80 *init.*; Philo *De ebrietate* 176-177.

¹⁸⁸ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.145-163; Diog. L. 9.83-84, Phil. *De ebrietate* 193-197.

¹⁸⁹ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.141-144; Diog. L. 9.87.

honey is sweet, and not bitter, then the appearance of the honey's being sweet is as persuasive as its contrary. This is nonsense. The point must be that honey is not in fact perceived by everybody as sweet, and therefore that common agreement as a standard of persuasiveness is counterfactual. A similar consideration can be made as regards the requirement of never, or hardly ever, varying.

If one is to establish the relation between these last two requirements and Aenesidemus' argument in the tropes, one notes that the condition of agreement in sensation is the one which is proved to be counterfactual in the first four tropes, according to which no appearance is agreed upon within any of the possible classes of perceivers (animals, humans, the same person in different circumstances, one sense-organ in relation to the other). The condition of invariability is, in turn, shown to be counterfactual in tropes 6-10 in Diogenes, according to which appearances vary at different times and under different circumstances.

One may further observe that the requirements of common agreement and invariability also apply to the content of the other *τρόποι* listed, where the point is, I submit, that things, in order to be persuasive, should be universally and consistently perceived as pleasant, impressive and disposed by law. Thus, agreement and invariability do not stand at the same level as the other requirements mentioned by Diogenes, but provide the standard on the basis of which to trust, or not to trust, any thing whatsoever, whereas being pleasant, impressive or conventionally disposed merely describes the range of things to which trustworthiness hypothetically applies in ethics, parallel to sense reports in epistemology, which are alluded to in the expression 'agreement according to sensation' (*κατ'αἴσθησιν συμφώνως ἔχειν*).

Diogenes juxtaposes the two different sets of requirements, but he himself is aware that they do not stand at the same level: at (iv) he points to certain *aporiai* concerning agreement (*ἀπορίαι κατὰ τὰς συμφωνίας*) as those which bring about suspension of judgement, and links them to the way in which "things appear to vary" (*τὰ ὑποκείμενα παραλλάττοντα ἐφαίνετο*), that is, precisely the failure of the first two requirements in the list. As Philo at *Ebr.* 169-170 puts it:

If it were always the case that the same objects produced the same impressions on us without any variation, it would perhaps be necessary that [...] we do not suspend our judgement on any point through doubt, but trust things in the way once and for all they appear, so as to choose some of them, and avoid others. But since we prove to be differently affected by them at different times, we can say

nothing with certainty about anything, because what appears is not constant, but subject to changes manifold and multiform.¹⁹⁰

Thus, if I am right, Aenesidemus does not purport to challenge the reliability of these requirements, but to question whether anything meets them. For it is “on the basis of these very same conditions” (κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς τρόπους) that the Sceptics show that things are untrustworthy, and these requirements do not undergo any refutation. Along these lines, I suggest that what Diogenes expounds at (ii) is a definition of what the persuasive ought to be like, to which Aenesidemus himself subscribed. However, both the impersonal expression πείθει at (i) and (ii), which leaves unspecified who is the object of this persuasion, and the third sentence which closes paragraph 48 at (iii): “hence they showed that the persuasiveness of the things opposite to the persuasive ones is in fact the same”, indicate that these requirements do not voice an idiosyncratic assumption on Aenesidemus’ part, but a commonly agreed notion, at least one agreed among laymen, of what the persuasive is like.¹⁹¹ However, whereas these requirements are generally ill-applied (hence some things are trusted, others not), under a closer scrutiny such as Aenesidemus’ everything turns out to be unreliable. One might paraphrase the text as follows: *setting forth the conditions on the basis of which we trust things... they show that, in respect of these conditions, those things which are trusted and the ones opposite to them are equally persuasive.*

Thus, the persuasiveness of the requirements listed at (ii) relies on a common presumption (or an alleged one), and hence, perhaps

¹⁹⁰ εἰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν τὰς αὐτὰς ἀεὶ συνέβαινε προσπίπτειν ἀπαραλλάκτους φαντασίας, ἣν ἴσως ἀναγκαῖον [...] περὶ μηδενὸς ἐνδοιάζοντας ἐπέχειν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπᾶς φανεῖσι πιστεύοντας τὰ μὲν αἰρεῖσθαι, τὰ δὲ ἔμπαλιν ἀποστρέφεσθαι. ἐπειδὴ δὲ διαφόρως ἀπ’ αὐτῶν εὐρισκόμεθα κινούμενοι, βέβαιον περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν ἂν ἔχοιμεν εἰπεῖν, ἅτε μὴ ἐστῶτος τοῦ φανέντος, ἀλλὰ πολυτρόποις καὶ πολυμόρφοις χρωμένον ταῖς μεταβολαῖς· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἀνιδρύτου τῆς φαντασίας οὕσης ἀνιδρύτον εἶναι καὶ τὴν ἐπ’ αὐτῇ κρίσιν. An echo of συμφώνως ἔχειν κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν as a counterfactual standard of truth is to found, perhaps, at Alexander *In Met.* 305.26-32, and in particular in the sentence: ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἀεὶ τὰ αὐτὰ φαίνεσθαι, which provides the implied conclusion of Aenesidemus’ argument in Diogenes. On Alexander’s possible dependence on Aenesidemus see Mansfeld (1988), p. 205.

¹⁹¹ The adverb σπανίως in πείθειν [...] τὰ μηδέποτε ἢ σπανίως γοῦν μεταπίπτοντα at Diog. L. 9.78b lends further support to this reading: no strictly normative criterion would allow such approximation. Note, however, that the Empiricists indeed made use of it (see Deichgräber’s Wortindex *s.v.* σπάνιον, τὸ). One cannot rule out the possibility of an allusion to the Academic idea of persuasiveness, but there is no evidence that the Academics ever spelled it out in these terms.

merely at the level of a *πρόληψις*,¹⁹² is also endorsed by Aenesidemus.¹⁹³ It is, I believe, no accident if these requirements echo those which the Sceptics adopt in everyday life. For agreement concerning observational data and consistency in the way things appear at different times are, as we saw, the criterion that the Empiricists follow in their medical practice.¹⁹⁴ Laws and habits occur in Sextus' description of his criterion of life at *PH* 1.24 and *PH* 1.238. Pleasure (as opposed to the professed 'arts of life') provides a natural criterion of choice at *PH* 1.87 and *M.* 11.143, and is identified by Aenesidemus as a goal at *Eus. PE* 14.18.4. The requirement of arousing wonder, by contrast, has no parallel in Sceptical material concerning their criterion. However, one may suppose that it covers everything which does not fall into the range of properly pleasant things, and yet strikes us all the same in such a way as to guide our choice.¹⁹⁵

An instance of how the requirements of universal agreement and invariability work is provided by Sextus in his argument against the identity between persuasiveness and truth at *M.* 8.51-53:

What then? Is what persuades us, that is, the 'persuasive', [...] to be termed true? But neither is this feasible. For if the persuasive is true, then because the same thing does not persuade all men nor the same men always, we shall be granting that the same thing exists and does not exist, and is at once both true and false; for insofar as it persuades some, it will be true and existent, but insofar as it does not persuade others, it will be false and non-existent. But it is impossible that the

¹⁹² On the Sceptics' distinction between 'notion' (*πρόληψις*) and 'apprehension' (*κατάληψις*) of something see *Sext. Emp. M.* 8.334a.

¹⁹³ There is enough evidence to show that Aenesidemus did not challenge common preconceptions. His approach to them appears to be twofold. On the one hand he denies any definite content to common preconceptions, thus countering the dogmatists' attempt at establishing their doctrines by appealing to them (see *Sext. Emp. M.* 11.42-44, where Aenesidemus endorses the commonly agreed notion of the good as 'what attracts us', and yet questions its designating a definite good to choose: nothing in fact attracts all men). On the other hand Aenesidemus too makes a positive appeal to what is commonly agreed, arguing that the Sceptics' principle of conflicting appearances is of this kind (*PH* 1.210, read against *M.* 8.8). Aenesidemus' fifth trope against the aetiologists provides another instance of his fondness for common preconceptions, as he presents the disagreement between common preconceptions and philosophical explanations as *ipso facto* refuting the latter.

¹⁹⁴ Gal., *On Medical Experience* p. 96 W: "they believe something can only be accepted and considered true, if it has been seen very many times, and in the same manner every time".

¹⁹⁵ Sextus at *PH* 1.142 gives the beauty of certain human bodies as an example, and at *M.* 1.143 he couples *θαυμάζειν* and *ἡδεσθαι* as both indicating irresistible emotions.

same thing should both exist and not exist, and be both true and false, so then the persuasive is not true either.¹⁹⁶

Diogenes offers a parallel testimony to this at 9.94: “We must not assume that what persuades us is actually true. For the same thing does not persuade all men nor the same men always”.¹⁹⁷ There is a obvious gap between the persuasive which is here under review and that at Diog. L. 9.78: there common agreement and invariability are parts of the definition of what the persuasive lies in; here, by contrast, τὸ πείθον, or πιθανόν, is described as failing to meet precisely these two conditions, which are now presented as conditions of truth, and not merely of persuasiveness. This confirms the normative and veritative character of the persuasion which is under discussion at Diog. L. 9.78, as opposed to this other persuasion (which primarily refers to *rhetorical* persuasion, as Diogenes makes clear in what follows at 94).¹⁹⁸ The underlying line of argument may be the following: *things, in order to be trusted, should satisfy the conditions of being agreed upon and not varying, and, under these conditions, they are also true. Things which are commonly regarded as persuasive, as long as they do not meet these requirements, are neither true nor to be termed persuasive.*

The requirements of agreement and invariability, again with reference to sense-objects, turn up also at Sext. Emp. M. 7.345, where they are associated with Aenesidemus’ tropes:

The senses in many cases give false reports and disagree with one another, as we have shown when expounding Aenesidemus’ ten tropes. But that which is in disagreement and at variance is not a criterion.¹⁹⁹

This passage directs us towards the second issue that I propose to pursue, namely Aenesidemus’ idea that knowledge covers, if anything, sense-objects alone. Diogenes at 9.78 *fin.* reports that “things persuade if they are in agreement according to sensation”, thus ruling out any agreement κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν as a possible source of

¹⁹⁶ Τί οὖν; τὸ πείθον ἡμᾶς, τὸ πιθανὸν ῥητέον ἀληθές [...] ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο τῶν ἀπόρων. εἰ γὰρ τὸ πιθανὸν ἀληθές ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ οὐ τὸ αὐτὸ πάντας πείθει οὐδὲ διὰ παντὸς τοὺς αὐτοὺς, δώσομεν τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὑπάρχειν καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχειν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀληθές ἅμα εἶναι καὶ ψεῦδος· ἡ μὲν γὰρ πείθει τινάς, ἀληθές ἐσται καὶ ὑπάρχον, ἡ δὲ ἑτέρους οὐ πείθει, ψεῦδος καὶ ἀνύπαρκτον. ἀδύνατον δέ γε τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ εἶναι καὶ μὴ εἶναι, ἀληθές τε ὑπάρχειν καὶ ψεῦδος· τοίνυν οὐδὲ τὸ πιθανὸν ἐστὶν ἀληθές.

¹⁹⁷ Τό τε πείθον οὐχ ὑποληπτέον ἀληθές ὑπάρχειν· οὐ γὰρ πάντας τὸ αὐτὸ πείθειν οὐδὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς συνεχές.

¹⁹⁸ γίνεται δὲ καὶ [...] ἡ πιθανότης παρὰ τὸ ἔνδοξον τοῦ λέγοντος.

¹⁹⁹ Ψεῦδονται τε ἐν πολλοῖς αἱ αἰσθήσεις καὶ διαφωνοῦσιν ἀλλήλαις, καθάπερ ἐδείξαμεν τοὺς παρὰ τῷ Αἰνισιδίμῳ δέκα τρόπους ἐπιόντες. τὸ δὲ διάφωνον καὶ ἐστασιασμένον οὐκ ἔστι κριτήριον.

persuasion.²⁰⁰ Likewise, the criterion of truth that Aenesidemus attributes to Heraclitus at *M.* 8.8 covers sense-objects alone. As I have argued,²⁰¹ this is because of a different ontological status which Aenesidemus ascribes to sense- as against thought-objects, traces of which are found both in his interpretation of Heraclitus and in his Sceptical arguments. If Aenesidemus is indeed committed to this idea, one would expect it somehow to inform the whole of his Scepticism, that is, one would expect the whole of his Scepticism to be a ‘sensualistic’ one. Yet what does a ‘sensualistic Scepticism’ comprise? And how can Scepticism consistently take this form? In what follows I shall investigate the ‘sensualistic’ features of Aenesidemus’ Scepticism, as ancient sources report/understood them, starting from the tropes.

III.6 *Sense-Perception*

Only four references to the tropes are found in Sextus, if one leaves aside his actual account of the tropes: at *PH* 2.56; 2.74; 3.50; and *M.* 7.345. In each of these passages the reference to the tropes is aimed at substantiating the claim that the senses do not grasp the truth. So far no cause for surprise: although the ten tropes allegedly cover sense- and thought-objects alike (*PH* 1.31; Diog. L. 9.78 *init.*), they in fact focus almost exclusively on the former, and, of course, eventually prove them to be untrustworthy.

However, the line of argument of one of these passages (*PH* 2.56) is interesting, and may shed some light onto the approach to sense-perception which underpins the composition of the tropes. The context in Sextus is a discussion as to whether the senses merely undergo empty affections (κενοπαθεῖν) or whether they are apprehensive of something (καταλαμβάνειν), arriving at the conclusion

²⁰⁰ True, the condition of being agreed upon also applies to laws and habits, which are thought-objects (νοούμενα). However, the status of this class of thought-objects is different from that of philosophical thought-objects. For adopting the given notion of what is legal, pious, social and the like, is purely passive. No λόγος is involved, and no κατάληψις is required. This explains why the Sceptics include laws and habit in their criterion of life along with sensory data. Sensory data are common to a certain class of people defined by their physical disposition. Likewise laws and habits are common to a certain class of people defined by their being born and living in a certain place. Of course, Stoic theoretical views too are common to a certain people, namely the affiliates to the school, except that one cannot help being born in Athens, being subject to its laws, and inheriting its traditions, whereas it is one’s arbitrary choice to join the Stoa rather than other philosophical schools.

²⁰¹ See above ch. III.1.

that this is impossible to adjudicate (50). Then Sextus continues (51-56):

Let it be granted, by way of concession, that the senses are not empty affections, and are apprehensive (ἀντιληπτικά). Even so, they will not be found any the less unreliable for our assessment of the real nature of external objects. This is because the senses undergo opposite affections by one and the same object — taste, for instance, perceives the same honey now as bitter, now as sweet; sight pronounces the same colour now blood-red now white etc. [a list of instances of conflicting sense-reports follows]. Thus, since even when in a natural state the senses contradict themselves, and their conflict is undecidable, and since we do not possess an agreed standard by means of which to decide it, our perplexities must necessarily follow. In support of this conclusion we may derive still more arguments from our previous account of the tropes of suspension.²⁰²

The hypothesis here under consideration is that the senses do not merely undergo empty affections, but are ‘apprehensive’ (ἀντιληπτικά) of something. However, what follows in the argument makes it obvious that ἀντιλαμβάνειν here is not synonymous with καταλαμβάνειν, at least if one takes καταλαμβάνειν as indicating cognitive access to an external state of affairs, as the Stoics did. What Sextus allows is, rather, that the affections which the senses undergo are caused by some external stimuli (e.g. that honey causes sweetness and bitterness), contending that, however ‘apprehensive’ the senses may be, they are untrustworthy on account of their conflicting reports.²⁰³ To this effect, Sextus mentions a series of instances of disagreement between sense-reports which also occur in the tropes (in particular tropes 3 and 4), and at the end of the passage he overtly declares that he has derived these instances from the tropes.

Of course, the tropes offer material which can be used for many different purposes, regardless of the intention of the author. Indeed, this material would have been equally at home in the previous part of

²⁰² Ἄλλ’ ἔστω κατὰ συγχώρησιν τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἀντιληπτικάς εἶναι· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἦττον καὶ οὕτως ἄπιστοι εὐρεθήσονται πρὸς τὴν κρίσιν τῶν ἐκτὸς ὑποκειμένων πραγμάτων. αἱ γοῦν αἰσθήσεις ὑπεναντίως κινεῦνται ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκτὸς, οἷον ἡ γεύσις ὑπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μέλιτος ὅτε μὲν πικράζεται, ὅτε δὲ γλυκάζεται, καὶ ἡ ὄρασις τὸ αὐτὸ χρῶμα ὅτε μὲν αἰμαῶν, ὅτε δὲ λευκὸν εἶναι δοκεῖ [...] διόπερ ἐπεὶ καὶ κατὰ φύσιν ἔχουσαι αἱ αἰσθήσεις ἐαυταῖς μάχονται, καὶ ἡ διαφωνία ἐστὶν ἀνεπίκριτος, ἐπεὶ μὴ ἔχομεν ὁμολογημένον κριτήριον, δι’ οὗ κρίνεσθαι δύνανται, τὰς αὐτὰς ἀπορίας ἀκολουθεῖν ἀνάγκη. καὶ ἄλλα δὲ πλείω μεταφέρειν πρὸς τὴν τοῦτου κατασκευὴν ἐνδέχεται ἐκ τῶν προειρημένων ἡμῖν περὶ τῶν τῆς ἐποχῆς τρόπων.

²⁰³ The verb ἀντιλαμβάνειν occurs in Aristocles’ account of Aenesidemus’ sixth trope at Eus. *PE* 14.18.12 (οὐδενὸς τε ἡμᾶς ἀπλοῦ καὶ ἀκραίφνου ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι), and probably belongs to Aenesidemus’ jargon.

Sextus' discussion, where it could have been invoked in support of the claim that the sensory data are empty affections of the body. If Sextus appeals to the tropes only at this stage in the argument, that may be taken to suggest that the idea that the senses are apprehensive of something is an assumption on which the ten tropes rest, or at least that Sextus understood them as doing so.

It would be bold to conclude, merely on the basis of this passage, that the author himself of the tropes was committed to the claim that the senses are apprehensive. Less so, however, if one bears in mind Aenesidemus' other claim that sensory data are real. As we saw, this claim rests upon the assumption that sensory data are the outcome of a process whose origin is in the external object, and therefore one which grants them universality and naturalness. The claim that the senses are apprehensive, if I understand it correctly, is informed by the same attitude towards sensory data. In particular it squares well with the idea, which I argued to be ultimately attributable to Aenesidemus, that the senses provide a natural criterion and that they accomplish some kind of *κατάληψις*, although not of an external state of affairs.²⁰⁴

Is there any additional evidence to the effect that the tropes, as the ancients understood them, presuppose the assumption that the senses 'apprehend' something? Indeed there is. This is found in Aristocles' refutation of Aenesidemus at Eus. *PE* 14.18.12:

It would be a pleasure, I tell you, to ask the fellow who was making such fine speeches [the ten tropes] whether he was speaking in full knowledge that things were in this way or in ignorance of it. For if he did not know, how could we believe him? But if he knew, he was an utter idiot declaring that all things are obscure, and saying at the same time that he knew so much. And when they expound such things, they make nothing else than an induction, showing what is the nature of appearances and of each particular thing. And this is, and is to be called, trust.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ See above ch. III.3.

²⁰⁵ ταῦτα δὲ, φημί, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα κομψολογούντα αὐτὸν ἡδέως ἂν τις ἤρετο, πότερον εὖ εἰδὼς λέγοι διότι τὰ πράγματα τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τρόπον ἢ ἀγνοῶν· εἰ μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ᾔδει, πῶς ἂν ἡμεῖς αὐτῷ πιστεύοιμεν; εἰ δ' ἐγίνωσκε, κομιδὴ τις ἦν ἡλίθιος ἅμα μὲν ὁδῆλα πάντα ἀποφαινόμενος, ἅμα δὲ τοσαῦτα λέγων εἰδέναι. καὶ μὴν ὅποτε γε τὰ τοιαῦτα διεξίειπεν, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ ἐπαγωγὴν τινα λέγουσι, δεικνύντες ὅποι' ἅττα εἴη τὰ φαινόμενα καὶ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα· τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτο καὶ ἔστι καὶ λέγεται πίστις. Aristocles' argument initially takes a dilemmatic form ("either... or..."), but then he goes on to state in a very assertive way that Aenesidemus' investigation in the tropes presupposes commitment (πίστις) to sense-reports. On this passage see also Hankinson (1995), pp. 122-123, and Chiesara (2001), p. 125, to whom I owe the translation (Chiesara (2001), p. 25, with minor changes).

Aristocles also applies to Pyrrho and Timon the refutative *topos* that, if the Sceptic says something, no matter what he says, he knows something, and so the occurrence of this *topos* also as regards Aenesidemus does not tell us much about him. The main point of interest for us here lies, rather, in the emphasis on the empirical framework which, in Aristocles' view, underpins the arguments in the tropes, and which leads him to identify Aenesidemus' methodology as an inductive one (ἐπαγωγή). We do not know whether Aenesidemus himself described his procedure in this way. Aristocles' precise phrasing, ἐπαγωγὴν τινα, might be taken to suggest that he did not. However, a possible piece of evidence that this is not just Aristocles, but a more widespread way of describing arguments such as those of the tropes, is provided by Plutarch, *Col.* 1118b:

The inductive argument which proves the senses to be neither accurate nor reliable does not deny that an object presents to us a certain appearance, but forbids us, though we continue to make use of the senses and take appearances as the guide in our everyday life, to trust them as entirely and infallibly true.²⁰⁶

In reply to Colotes' charge that Socrates' know-nothing stance makes life impossible, Plutarch presents Socrates' attitude to the senses in terms which recall Aenesidemus' phenomenalism very closely. The expression 'inductive argument' (λόγος ἐπαγόμενος) echoes Aristocles' ἐπαγωγή, and the reference is to arguments against sense-perception very similar to those of the tropes. Such an anachronistic representation of Socrates' position may seem strange to us, but there is good reason to think that some late Academics,²⁰⁷ presumably Plutarch's source here, were engaged in foisting Aenesidemus' Scepticism, by that time the authoritative one, onto Socrates.²⁰⁸ The reference to 'induction' in both Aristocles and Plutarch is hardly a

²⁰⁶ ὁ δὲ τὰς αἰσθήσεις λόγος ἐπαγόμενος ὡς οὐκ ἀκριβεῖς οὐδ' ἀσφαλεῖς πρὸς πίστιν οὕσας οὐκ ἀναιρεῖ τὸ φαίνεσθαι τῶν πραγμάτων ἡμῖν ἕκαστον, ἀλλὰ χρωμένοις κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ἐπὶ τὰς πράξεις ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι τὸ πιστεῦειν ὡς ἀληθές τι πάντη καὶ ἀδιαπτώτοις οὐ δίδωσιν αὐταῖς.

²⁰⁷ Plutarch's friend Favorinus, who endorsed the phenomenalist version of Scepticism which is distinctively 'Pyrrhonist', is one of them.

²⁰⁸ Galen's target in his lost *Reply to Favorinus Against Socrates* may well have been this Scepticizing Socrates (see *Libris suis* 12 = T. 19a B. and the editor's commentary in Barigazzi (1966), p. 178). Retrojecting Aenesidemus' formulation of Scepticism onto Socrates may have been intended to dismiss Scepticism as an autonomous tradition of thought originating with Pyrrho — something which the Academics had good reason to be keen on. The account of Arcesilaus' postulated yielding to impulses at 1122C-E, an account which conflicts with our evidence on Arcesilaus' εὐλογον (Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.158), could be interpreted along similar lines.

matter of coincidence: rather, it is a widely accepted way of describing Aenesidemus' procedure.

As Aristocles remarks, Aenesidemus' adoption of an inductive methodology (whether or not Aenesidemus himself described it in this way) presupposes trust (πίστις) in sense-reports, something which is inconsistent with Scepticism. The problem which Aristocles raises is, I believe, a serious one. A possible way out for Aenesidemus could have been to specify that he was not committed to any inductive procedure, and that only his dogmatic opponents, against whom the tropes are addressed, are so. This is arguably Sextus' motivation for allowing that "it might be the case that the tropes are fallacious".²⁰⁹ For Sextus' remark does not relate to certain fanciful anecdotes or pseudo-scientific observations incorporated in the tropes (which Sextus himself would have no reason to question, and the rejection of which would in any case not undermine the argument). It relates, I submit, to the very framework which originates the tropes. In this way, Sextus intended to forestall criticisms like that of Aristocles.

It is possible that Aenesidemus too made a point similar to that of Sextus, or at least implied it. My contention is, however, that he did not need to. The claim that the senses are apprehensive of something and, more generally, the set of ideas which formed the basis of his phenomenalism enable him to adopt the inductive procedure of which Aristocles speaks, without thereby attributing actual truth to sense-reports. (At least Plutarch in his defence of Socrates finds no incompatibility between the two ideas.) For Aenesidemus does not deny that we are able to identify the external objects which are responsible for our affections.²¹⁰ What he does question is merely the inference that external objects in their own nature correspond to the way in which they affect our senses.

III.7 *Intellect*

Thus, the senses, for Aenesidemus, do 'apprehend' something, and their data do have a certain reality. However, the senses give conflicting reports, and therefore they do not enable us to adjudicate inner

²⁰⁹ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.35: ἐνδέχεται αὐτοὺς [τοὺς τρόπους] καὶ σαθοὺς εἶναι.

²¹⁰ Everson (1991), p. 136 arrives at the same conclusion: "The argument of the Modes can, moreover, be taken to presuppose not only the existence of external objects, but also their causal role in perception".

properties of the external object, because appearances are all equally trustworthy and irrefutable. Conflict as such, were it decidable, would not bring about suspension of judgement. But what can decide the conflict? Not the senses themselves, whose job is merely to report their affections. If anything, it must be the other psychic function which is usually thought to accompany, indeed to command the senses, i.e. intellect.

However, not even intellect will decide the conflict. The alleged reason why not is not that intellect too gives conflicting responses, as one might have expected.²¹¹ Instead, intellect is unable to judge the senses, because the senses are intellect's only access to things, and how can intellect judge that on which it is itself dependent? Of the four passages where Sextus refers to the tropes only two address the problem of how to decide the conflict, and both arrive at this conclusion,²¹² which also occurs in Sextus' account of the tropes, as well as in Philo's arguments against the senses incorporating material from Aenesidemus.²¹³ All this suggests that the point that intellect is intrinsically not entitled to judge the senses goes back to Aenesidemus himself.²¹⁴

²¹¹ This is a well established motif in Sceptical material; see Sext. Emp. *M.* 8.138: τῶν τε κινήματων τῆς διανοίας ἰδίων ὄντων ἐκάστου οὐδὲν ἔσται κοινὸν ἀληθές, μηδενὸς δὲ ὄντος κοινού τινος ἀληθοῦς πάντ' ἔσται ἀσαφὴ καὶ διάφωνα. See also Diog. L. 9.95: ὁ λόγος διάφωνος [...] ὁ νοῦς ποικίλως τρέπεται.

²¹² Sext. Emp. *PH* 2.74: πόθεν γὰρ εἴσεται ἡ διάνοια, εἰ ὁμοία ἐστί τὰ πάθη τῶν αἰσθήσεων τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς, μήτε αὐτὴ τοῖς ἐκτός ἐντυγχάνουσα, μήτε τῶν αἰσθήσεων αὐτὴ τὴν φύσιν αὐτῶν δηλουσῶν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἑαυτῶν πάθη, καθάπερ ἐκ τῶν τρόπων τῆς ἐποχῆς ἐπελογισάμην; *PH* 3.50: εἴτε τὸ ἀσώματον αἰσθητὸν ἐστίν, ἀκατάληπτόν ἐστι διὰ τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν ζώων καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν αἰσθήσεων καὶ τῶν περιστάσεων καὶ παρὰ τὰς ἐπιμυξίας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν προειρημένων ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῶν δέκα τρόπων, εἴτε νοητόν, μὴ διδομένης αὐτόθεν τῆς τῶν αἰσθητῶν καταλήψεως, ἂφ' ἧς ὁρμώμενοι τοῖς νοητοῖς ἐπιβάλλειν δοκοῦμεν, οὐδὲ ἡ τῶν νοητῶν αὐτόθεν κατάληψις. Here the point is framed in slightly different terms, explaining why we cannot grasp thought-objects.

²¹³ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.99: τῶν αἰσθήσεων μὴ καταλαμβάνουσῶν τὰ ἐκτός, οὐδὲ ἡ διάνοια ταῦτα δύναται καταλαμβάνειν; Philo, *Ebr.* 170: ἀνάγκη, ἀνιδρύτου τῆς φαντασίας οὐσης, ἀνιδρύτου εἶναι καὶ τὴν ἐπ' αὐτῇ κρίσιν, and also 196: ἀνάγκη καὶ τὰς προσπιπτούσας διαφέρειν φαντασίας καὶ τὰς κρίσεις ἀλλήλαις πεπολεμῶσθαι. Philo presents conflicting judgements as a direct product of conflicting sense-impressions, on the assumption, it seems, that the former cannot but conform to the latter.

²¹⁴ I here disagree with Striker (1996), p. 121, who hypothesises that, of the three arguments for undecidability in Sextus' account of Aenesidemus' tropes (infinite regress, dependence of intellect upon the senses, and equal-authority argument), only the latter goes back to Aenesidemus. It is unfortunate that Photius in his résumé of the *Pyrrhonist Discourses* tells us nothing about the argument patterns which Aenesidemus used. Nonetheless, an echo to the argument pattern based on

Echoes of this ‘empiricist axiom’, as it has been described,²¹⁵ are found throughout Sextus’ output,²¹⁶ and admittedly it looks as if it merely amounts to a dialectical move, providing a shortcut in order to dismiss reasoning along with sensation, rather than being a positive claim to which Sextus is committed. As a matter of fact, the ‘axiom’ is in sharp conflict with Sextus’ assumption that there are things which manifest themselves to intellect directly, without any sensory mediation. This assumption is in effect widespread in post-Hellenistic epistemology. Indeed, the consideration that Sextus shares it with most of his contemporaries enables us to frame our question in historical terms. Had Sextus appealed to the argument pattern based on the dependence of intellect upon the senses for the sake of arguing against the dogmatists contemporary with him, it would have been an ineffective move, since his opponents would have simply denied the premise of the argument, and responded that intellect does have some data of its own, and is not dependent on sense-perception. Therefore this argument is not, and cannot be, a dialectical move on Sextus’ own part: it is found in Sextus, because he borrows it from earlier Sceptics.

As a matter of fact, the *topos* of the dependence of intellect on the senses fits much better the empirically-oriented framework of Hellenistic philosophy.²¹⁷ Aenesidemus himself appears to be heavily empirically-oriented, and one should not be surprised at this: the Sceptic too lives in a time and place, and he cannot help making use of the given conceptual and terminological categories. What the Sceptic can do is refute this or that doctrine, but not the conceptual

the dependence of intellect on the senses can perhaps be found at the very beginning (*Bibl.* 212 169b 19-21): “The overall aim of the book is to establish that there is no firm basis for cognition, either through sense-perception, or, *still less* (ἀλλ’ οὐτε μὴν), through reasoning”. Agrippa will adopt a very different strategy, arguing that intellect cannot judge the senses, because intellect would, in turn, need something to be judged by, namely the senses, thus raising the aporia of circular reasoning (Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.170-172). Russo (1978), pp. 545-546 describes Agrippa’s Scepticism as ‘eleatic’, and I think that this description captures the kernel of Agrippa’s dialectical Scepticism, as against Aenesidemus’. Hirzel (1883), 3rd vol. pp. 112-136 was the first to emphasise the difference between Aenesidemus’ empirical Scepticism and Agrippa’s dialectical one. Along similar lines, at least as regards Aenesidemus, Natorp (1884). *Contra* Brochard (1887), p. 228 and *passim*.

²¹⁵ Stough (1969), p. 87.

²¹⁶ Sext. Emp. *PH* 3.47; 63; *M.* 8.57-58; 182; 356.

²¹⁷ By ‘empirically-oriented’ I refer to an attitude which regards any knowledge as ultimately derived from sense-perception. This description does not rule out rationalist approaches to knowledge such as that of the Stoics, as long as the Stoics too conceived of our mind as a *tabula rasa* (Aet. *Plac.* 4.11 1-4).

framework in which he himself partakes. In fact, those who dismissed the thought pattern of Hellenistic philosophy are not the Sceptics, but rather the Middle Platonists and all those who put aside its empirical and naturalistic paradigm, replacing it with a new one.

For this reason it is mistaken, I believe, to account for the Sceptics' yielding to the conceptual categories of their time simply in terms of a dialectical move for the sake of argument, and I can see no reason why Hellenistic Sceptics such as Aenesidemus should not share the assumption that intellect depends on the senses. On the contrary, it appears to be the case that a very specific formulation of this idea, namely the assumption that intellect is *entirely* dependent on the senses, makes their reasoning complete: *conflict among sense-appearances* → *incapability of intellect to judge the senses* → *suspension*. In this respect, Aenesidemus and his followers go further than conforming to the thought pattern of Hellenistic epistemology. The Stoics, though conceding that intellectual knowledge is dependent upon sense-perception, would never accept the conclusion that intellect is thereby not entitled to judge sense-reports. Nor, for that matter, have the Stoics ever been urged to accept this conclusion by their Academic opponents, whose withholding of assent rests upon the assumption that our intellect plays an active role in knowledge. Reason, for the Academics, is indeed capable of judging the senses, and, as long as sense-reports do not appear to her to have enough warrant of truth, reason will judge that it should not assent to them. No reference to any incapability of our intellect to judge sense-reports is found here.²¹⁸ Accordingly, Tertullian *De anima* 17 presents Academic scepticism plainly as a form of rationalism, in full agreement with Plato,²¹⁹ and the middle-Platonists, or at least some of them, claim

²¹⁸ Arcesilaus' doctrine of withholding assent involves his endorsement of the Stoic and, for that matter, Socratic identification of wisdom with our mind's capability to adjudicate and, if necessary, resist appearances (Cic. *Fin.* 3.31: *summum munus sapientis esse obsistere visis adsensusque suos firme sustinere*, see also *Ac.* 2.76-7). The title of Aenesidemus' treatise *Against Wisdom*, in which he argued for appearances being a criterion (Diog. L. 9.106), might be taken to suggest that he rejected this, as well as any other notion of wisdom. I should add that the attribution to Arcesilaus of the phenomenalist account of action as expounded at Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1122C-D is, *pace* Ioppolo (2000), controversial, and also that Sextus' provisional acknowledgement at *PH* 1.232, that Arcesilaus is the only Academic to be consistently sceptic, does not conflict with my evaluation of his thought, because Sextus at 233 goes on to differentiate him from the Sceptics precisely on the basis of the different way in which he arrives at suspension of judgment.

²¹⁹ Tarrant (1985), especially pp. 6-13, outlines an interpretation of Academic scepticism down to Philo of Larissa in the light of an anti-empiricism attitude,

allegiance to the Sceptical Academy, as if it had provided the *pars destruens* of their rescuing of intellectual knowledge.²²⁰ Aenesidemus could not be more distant. Here again, I submit, his source of inspiration is to be sought in medical Empiricism.

III.8 *Sceptical Arguments*

So far I have focused on the tropes and on Aenesidemus' attitude towards the senses. However, Aenesidemus was, of course, not only concerned with the reports of the senses, and his Scepticism also applies to theoretical beliefs. However, his approach to them is very different. Here we are no longer dealing with something which has a sense-perceptual reality. Here the target is the arguments and the notions by means of which philosophers profess to be able to explain to us the truth of things.

Aenesidemus provided a systematic refutation of all these notions and theories in his *Pyrrhonist discourses*. In his résumé Photius reports Aenesidemus' targets book by book, but, unfortunately, not the way in which Aenesidemus' arguments ran. However, the refutative *topos* based on the dichotomy between sense- and thought-objects (which Sextus *M.* 8.215 explicitly ascribes to this work of Aenesidemus), must have found there a much wider application than is preserved in Sextus. The *topos*, as we saw, relies on the exclusion of whatever object is under investigation from the class of sensory data, on the assumption that, once this is proved to be an object of thought, it is *ipso facto* abolished.

A similar argument pattern also occurs in the Sceptic refutations of change and body at *PH* 3.108 and *PH* 3.47-48 (= *M.* 9.437-439) respectively: change and body are either sensed or thought; but they are not sensed, because the senses are merely passive, whereas the notions of change and body presuppose an elaboration on sensory data by means of 'concurrent recollection' and 'composition' respectively; if, on the other hand, change and body are thought, their actual existence comes into question because of the disagreement which involves the very existence of thought-objects.²²¹ Sextus at *PH*

which, as he argues, provides the *pars destruens* of the later revival of Platonism. *Contra* Brittain (2001), pp. 146-166, whose emphasis on the allegedly empiricist features of the epistemology of Philo remains, however, controversial.

²²⁰ This is the case of Plutarch; see Opsomer (1998). Hints in this directions are already in Tarrant (1985).

²²¹ On change see Sext. *Emp.* *PH* 3.108: εἰ ἔστι τις μεταβολή, ἥτοι αἰσθητή

3.48 (= M. 9.438) goes so far as to spell out the reason why thought-objects do not exist as independent entities:

If body is a thought-object, there must be pre-existent in the nature of things some sense-objects from which to derive the notion of bodies, they being arrived at by means of intellect [...] Since, on the contrary, there is no sense-object from which we can derive the notion of body, body will not exist as a thought-object either.

The idea is that either thought-objects mirror sense-objects in such a way as eventually to conflate with them, or they do not have any reality, and one should do away with them. Sextus does not explicitly attribute these arguments to Aenesidemus. However, their consistency with those of Aenesidemus suggests that he is behind these too. To be sure, this argument pattern does not belong to Sextus, who overtly distances himself from it.²²²

Thus, the argument pattern which relies on the dichotomy between sense- and thought-objects provides a refutative tool which applies to any philosophical notion whatsoever, thus covering a scope comparable to that of Agrippa's five tropes (Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.164-177). Yet, whereas Agrippa points to certain 'transcendental' fallacies,

ἐστιν ἡ νοητή, καὶ αἰσθητή μὲν οὐκ ἐστίν·· αἱ μὲν γάρ> αἰσθήσεις ἀπλοπαθεῖς εἰσιν, ἡ δὲ μεταβολὴ συμμημόνευσιν ἔχειν δοκεῖ τοῦ τε ἐξ οὗ μεταβάλλει καὶ εἰς ὃ μεταβάλλειν λέγεται· εἰ δὲ νοητή ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ περὶ τῆς ὑπάρξεως τῶν νοητῶν ἀνεπίκριτος γέγονε παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς διαφωνία, καθάπερ ἤδη πολλάκις ὑπεμνήσαμεν, οὐδὲν ἔξομεν λέγειν οὐδὲ περὶ τῆς ὑπάρξεως τῆς μεταβολῆς. On body see *PH* 3.47-48: τῶν ὄντων τὰ μὲν φασιν εἶναι αἰσθητά, τὰ δὲ νοητά, καὶ τὰ μὲν τῇ διανοίᾳ καταλαμβάνεσθαι, τὰ δὲ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν, καὶ τὰς μὲν αἰσθήσεις ἀπλοπαθεῖς εἶναι, τὴν δὲ διάνοιαν ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν αἰσθητῶν καταλήψεως ἐπὶ τὴν κατάληψιν τῶν νοητῶν ἰέναι. εἰ οὖν ἔστι τι σῶμα, ἥτοι αἰσθητόν ἐστιν ἢ νοητόν. καὶ αἰσθητόν μὲν οὐκ ἐστίν· κατὰ γὰρ συναθροισμὸν μήκους καὶ βάθους καὶ πλάτους καὶ ἀντιτυπίας καὶ χρώματος καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν καταλαμβάνεσθαι δοκεῖ, σὺν οἷς θεωρεῖται· αἱ δὲ αἰσθήσεις ἀπλοπαθεῖς εἶναι λέγονται παρ' αὐτοῖς [...] εἰ δὲ νοητόν εἶναι λέγεται τὸ σῶμα, δεῖ τι πάντως ὑπάρχειν ἐν τῇ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων αἰσθητόν, ἃφ' οὗ ἡ τῶν σωματῶν νοητῶν ὄντων ἔσται νόησις [...] μὴ ὄντος οὖν ἐν τῇ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων αἰσθητοῦ τινος ἃφ' οὗ ἡ νόησις ἔσται τοῦ σώματος, οὐδὲ νοητόν ἔσται τὸ σῶμα (see also M. 9.437-439).

²²² See Sext. Emp. M. 10.64-65. Here Sextus sets forth a *diaphonia* between those who consider motion to be sensible and those who consider it to be intelligible. Then he apparently endorses, and argues for, the latter view, in terms which recall the refutation of change very closely: *motion is conceived of by a 'concurrent recollection' which the senses cannot perform. Thus motion is not sensible.* At this point one would have expected Sextus to reach the usual conclusion of the argument pattern: *but motion does not exist as an intelligible either, as there is no sense-object from which to derive the idea of motion.* Instead, Sextus abruptly drops this line of argument, contending that "yet it is a matter of indifference whether motion is in itself apprehended by the senses or by intellect; for it is plain that the evidence of facts bears out the view that motion exists" (M. 10.66; see also *PH* 3.65: ὅσον ἐπὶ τοῖς φαινομένοις δοκεῖν εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν). On the passage see above p. 44.

which are intrinsic to the very way in which reasoning works, Aenesidemus' arguments rely on the assumption that everything beyond sensory appearances is an empty product of the mind. This gives an idea of the different procedure and, ultimately, different framework which characterises Aenesidemus as opposed to later Sceptics.

Hypothetically comparable to Agrippa's tropes are Aenesidemus' own, at least for the name of tropes itself. Yet, the similarity between Aenesidemus' and Agrippa's tropes is far from substantial. Pursuing this issue will reinforce the point I have been making about Aenesidemus' approach, bringing my discussion full circle.

Τρόποι are basically headings which the members of the school memorise in order to face public disputes with opponents successfully. Sextus and Plutarch also call them τόποι,²²³ implicitly comparing the tropes with the *loci* which provide the rhetor with material ready to use in his orations. The use that Sextus makes of Agrippa's argument patterns throughout his works agrees with this reading.

Sextus appears to regard Agrippa's tropes as *complementary* to Aenesidemus' ten.²²⁴ To my knowledge, no satisfactory explanation has been given of this point. It is certainly not a question of making up a fictitious agreement between early and late Sceptics: Sextus' criticism of Aenesidemus' eight tropes, as found at *PH* 1.185 (see below), shows that this problem did not concern him. The fact is, rather, that Agrippa's five tropes do not overlap with Aenesidemus' ten, covering a different area to which Sceptical *elenchos* applies. A comparison between the two sets of tropes shows that this area is precisely that of dogmatic theories, as opposed to sense-reports. Aenesidemus reviews the factors which prevent us from inferring the nature of things from sense reports. Agrippa, by contrast, focuses on the logical *aporiai* which affect the dogmatic way of arguing as such. In this respect Agrippa's and Aenesidemus' tropes have such a different target, and follow such a different procedure, that Sextus' claim that they are only complementary is justified.²²⁵

²²³ See the title of Plutarch's work no. 158 in the Lamprias' catalogue and Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.36.

²²⁴ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.177: Τοιοῦτοι μὲν καὶ οἱ παρὰ τοῖς νεωτέροις παραδιδόμενοι πέντε τρόποι· οὓς ἐκτίθενται οὐκ ἐκβάλλοντες τοὺς δέκα τρόπους, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τοῦ ποικιλωτέρου καὶ διὰ τούτων σὺν ἐκείνοις ἐλέγχειν τὴν τῶν δογματικῶν προπέτειαν. See also Diog. L. 9.88.

²²⁵ The specious overlapping of the trope of relativity in both Aenesidemus and Agrippa does not disagree with this, in that Aenesidemus' own trope of

On the other hand, Sextus regards Agrippa's five tropes as a *replacement* for Aenesidemus' eight.²²⁶ The target is in this case the same: both Aenesidemus and Agrippa aim to establish the *aporiai* which apply to dogmatic arguments and theoretical claims. However, Aenesidemus' eight tropes fail to do their job properly: he does not address the intrinsic fallacies of reasoning in the same way as Agrippa does. He merely provides a phenomenology of mistakes and inconsistencies which may, and may not, affect causal explanations. Moreover, Aenesidemus' target here are not theoretical claims in general, but specifically the explanations which physicians and scientists put forward concerning natural phenomena, and which philosophers also put forward, to the extent that philosophy overlaps here with science.²²⁷ Modern literature has often overlooked the precise reference of the term *αἰτιολογία*, presenting Aenesidemus' eight tropes as an overall attack on the philosophical theory of causation. In fact, the verb *αἰτιολογεῖν* and its cognates are abundantly attested in medical and scientific literature, but rare in philosophical literature.²²⁸ Sextus himself employs it only in the first book of his *Outlines*, when expounding Aenesidemus' anti-aetiological tropes. One of the rare, and late (post-Posidonian) occurrences of the term in Stoic material provides evidence for the specific target of aetiological investigation:

Their physical doctrine they divide in three parts, the first deals with the universe, the second with the elements, and the third is the aetiological one. [...] The aetiological part is itself subdivided into two. And in one of its aspects it overlaps with medical investigation, insofar as it involves investigation of the ruling-part-of-the-soul and the phenomena of the soul, seeds, and the like. Whereas the other part, which investigates how to explain vision, what causes the image in the mirror, what is the origin of clouds, thunder, rainbow, halos, comets, and the like, is claimed by the mathematicians also.²²⁹

relativity was probably qualitatively different from Agrippa's, and it is probably Sextus who superimposed Agrippa's version of it onto Aenesidemus' own in his account of the eighth trope at *PH* 1.135-140 (Striker (1996), pp. 126-127) and Annas and Barnes (1985), pp. 142-143).

²²⁶ Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.185: *τάχα δ' ἂν καὶ οἱ πέντε τρόποι τῆς ἐποχῆς ἀπαρκοῦεν πρὸς τὰς αἰτιολογίας*. See Declava Caizzi (1992b), pp. 289-292.

²²⁷ Hankinson (1995), p. 217 appears to be aware of the actual target of Aenesidemus' eight tropes: 'Aenesidemus Modes are explicitly restricted to scientific and cosmological theorising'.

²²⁸ The term is even absent from Adler's *Index verborum* in *SVF* 4. Epicurus did use it, but in distinctively scientific contexts (e. g. meteorological discussions). Nonetheless, Brehier (1918) is certainly right in identifying Epicurus as one of Aenesidemus' targets.

²²⁹ Diog. L. 7.132-133: *Τὸν δὲ φυσικὸν λόγον διαιροῦσιν εἰς τε τὸν περὶ σωμάτων*

Diogenes here tells us that the inquiry in the location of the ruling-part falls in the area of aitiology. In fact, however, Chrysippus extensively discussed the question, but apparently never described his discussion as an aitiology — a term which, quite apart from the subject-matter involved, appears to be mainly used in scientific contexts.²³⁰ The fact that Aenesidemus devoted his eight tropes to such a limited area of philosophy, which in the first instance is not even a properly philosophical area, may be taken as evidence that he was engaged in disputes which did not primarily involve philosophers, and accords with the fact that his restoration of 'Pyrrhonist' Scepticism originated in Alexandria.

The explanations by scientists and philosophers to observational data are, of course, thought-objects, and yet these thought-objects, as opposed to those which belong to other, and more theoretical, areas of philosophy, directly relate to our way of interpreting the sensible world. Here again the sensible world appears to be the primary scope of Aenesidemus' investigation.

τόπον καὶ περὶ ἀρχῶν καὶ στοιχείων καὶ θεῶν καὶ περάτων καὶ τόπου καὶ κενοῦ. καὶ οὕτω μὲν εἰδικῶς, γενικῶς δ' εἰς τρεῖς τόπους, τὸν τε περὶ κόσμου καὶ τὸν περὶ τῶν στοιχείων καὶ τρίτον τὸν αἰτιολογικόν [...] τὸν τ' αἰτιολογικὸν εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν διμερῆ· μὴ δ' αὐτοῦ ἐπισκέψει ἐπικοινωνεῖν τὴν τῶν ἰατρῶν ζήτησιν, καθ' ἣν ζητοῦσι περὶ τε τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν ψυχῇ γινομένων καὶ περὶ σπερμάτων καὶ τῶν τούτοις ὁμοίων· τοῦ δ' ἑτέρου καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν μαθημάτων ἀντιποιεῖσθαι, οἷον πῶς ὁρώμεν, τίς ἡ αἰτία τῆς κατοπτρικῆς φαντασίας, ὅπως νέφη συνίσταται, βρονταὶ καὶ ἱριδες καὶ ἄλλως καὶ κομῆται καὶ τὰ παραπλήσια.

²³⁰ Burkhard (1973), p. 100 interprets Aenesidemus' anti-aetiological work as primarily addressed against Posidonius, the first Stoic to explore aetiological issues, but this interpretation seems to me to be too restrictive.

PART TWO

THE SOUL

INTRODUCTION

In the first part of the book I advanced a reading of the epistemology which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus in the light of Scepticism. In the course of the discussion the need arose to examine more closely what sort of Scepticism is in fact attributable to Aenesidemus. Evidence available suggests that he pursued an empirical formulation of scepticism, with which his epistemology καθ' Ἡράκλειτον is reconcilable: our thoughts are empty products of the mind; our only access to things are the senses, and any attempt to go beyond them is a dead end. No matter whether or not this set of assumptions is consistent with our idea of what Scepticism ought to be like. It is a fact that arguments attributable to Aenesidemus do presuppose these assumptions.

Some scholars speak of 'naïve realism': 'realism' because Aenesidemus attributes the same reality and reliability to any sense report, on this basis arriving at undecidability; 'naïve' because this attribution is, in the view of these scholars, naïve. In doing so, however, Aenesidemus himself is by no means naïf. According to these scholars, he is disingenuous: he appropriates the account of knowledge which best suits his refutative strategy, and fails to address more refined accounts, against which his arguments would be inconclusive.

This line of interpreting Aenesidemus, in dialectical terms, incurs, however, more than one difficulty. First of all, Aenesidemus is never found refuting, or distancing from, 'naïve' realism: he merely urges the Sceptical conclusions at which one arrives on that basis. Secondly, no opponent of Aenesidemus is committed to the assumptions he makes. If these assumptions are not attributable to his opponents, it remains that they are attributable to Aenesidemus himself, being a part of his scepticism. Nothing conflicts with this hypothesis. On the contrary, it enables us to make good sense of several reports on Aenesidemus, not least those concerning his Heraclitus.

Any account of knowledge presupposes a certain view of the nature and functioning of our mind ('soul'). However, it appears to be the case that Aenesidemus and his followers were not willing to go into these questions, perhaps because they regarded empiricism as such a self-evident attitude as not to require speculations on the

soul.²³¹ Nonetheless, when we come to Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' material, we do find a relatively rich body of texts (four in Tertullian's *De anima* and two in Sextus, four including *M.* 7.127-134 and *M.* 8.286) which show his deep interest in the soul. Three are the main ideas of his Heraclitus: the substance of the soul is air (*Tert. DA* 9); mind is the same as the senses, and through them it "stretches out" from the body (*Sext. Emp. M.* 7.350; *Tert. DA* 14); our mind/ruling-part-of-the-soul lies outside the body (*Sext. Emp. M.* 7.349; *Tert. DA* 15).

Some commentators have interpreted these doctrines as items of a dogmatic account of the soul, to which Aenesidemus was committed during his alleged dogmatic phase. However, this interpretation presupposes the existence of a dogmatic phase in Aenesidemus' thought, for which there is no evidence. Against this interpretation it has also been objected that locating our mind/ruling-part-of-the-soul outside our body is just nonsense, and if Aenesidemus did so, it must be in order to make fun of philosophical speculations.²³² One may further observe that Sextus, immediately after reporting that Aenesidemus located the mind/ruling-part-of-the-soul outside the body (*M.* 7.349), ascribes yet another doctrine to him (*M.* 7.350), i.e. that our mind stretches out through the sense-organs to the outside world (presumably from inside the body). The two doctrines conflict with one another, and neither Aenesidemus nor any other sensible person could be seriously committed to both at the same time.

This line of interpreting Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' account of the soul, in dialectical terms, is *prima facie* appealing. However, the specious contradiction between the two reports in Sextus is in fact resolvable upon consideration of the parallel passages in Tertullian, as I shall show. Even Aenesidemus' placing our mind/ruling-part-of-the-soul outside the body might voice a more sensible point of view, the precise formulation of Aenesidemus' Heraclitean doctrines being affected by the fact that he is explaining the ideas of so paradoxical a thinker as Heraclitus.

²³¹ There is evidence, however, that at least some Empiricist doctors openly denied the existence of intellect (*Gal. Subfig. Emp.* 87).

²³² Burkhard (1973), p. 107 hypothesises that Aenesidemus' original point was to argue on both sides: humans as rational beings do possess an intellect and at the same time they do not, this being located outside the body. But this hypothesis does not find any support in the texts. On the contrary, the report on Heraclitus at *Sext. Emp. M.* 8.286, which is attributable to Aenesidemus, explicitly denies that humans are rational.

In this chapter I shall argue that Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines on the soul do voice a consistent and sensible account of the soul, and that this account was not only meant to challenge the Stoic interpretation of Heraclitus and, beyond it, the Stoics themselves, but that it also had a positive meaning of its own, with which Aenesidemus *in propria persona* may have sympathised. I shall also argue that Aenesidemus sympathised with this account of the soul, because it in some way provides the foundation to his idea that intellect is entirely dependent upon the senses, and that the senses, in turn, merely report their own affections, thus doing away with any call for knowledge of the outside world.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOUL AND THE BODY

IV.1 *The Ruling-Part-of-the-Soul* (Sext. Emp. 8.349; Tert. DA 15)

The texts from which I shall start my discussion of Aenesidemus' account of the soul καθ' Ἡράκλειτον are Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.349 and 350. We are in the section of Sextus' argument against the criterion of truth in which he refutes the hypothesis that intellect alone is a criterion (348-54). Sextus argues that intellect, if it is capable of judging things, should, before anything else, have known its own nature (the substance of which it is composed, the place in which it exists, and similar questions). Yet, the disagreement among philosophers on everything which concerns intellect shows that intellect comprehends nothing about itself, and thus that still less is it a criterion for judging things.

In order to substantiate this last point Sextus gives some examples of conflicting views concerning intellect: Dicaearchus denies the very existence of intellect; Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον places intellect outside the body; other people 'following' Democritus (τινὲς κατὰ Δημόκριτον) place it in the whole of the body, the majority instead place intellect in a specific part of the body, but disagree on which part (*M.* 7.349). A further instance of disagreement concerning intellect involves its relationship with the senses. It is in this context that Sextus reports that Aenesidemus and Strato, as against the majority of philosophers, do not distinguish between thinking and sensing (*M.* 7.350). Here Sextus own's words:

The intellect, if it is capable of distinguishing falsehood and truth, should have been aware much earlier of its own nature: the substance, for instance, of which it is made, the place where it exists, and all the rest. But it cannot altogether comprehend such things, seeing that some like Dicaearchus say that it is nothing more than the body in a certain disposition, while others have said that it exists, but have not all agreed that it is contained in the same place: some, like Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, place it outside the body, others in the whole of the body, like some κατὰ Δημόκριτον, and yet others in a part of the body, but the views of these last, again, are very diverse. Also, while some maintain that the mind and the senses are different

things (so does the majority), others maintain that they are not, the mind stretching out as through pipe-holes of the sense-organs (Strato the physiologist and Aenesidemus were the initiators of this opinion). Therefore, the intellect is not a criterion.²³³

In both cases Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' view has no relevance to the point that Sextus is making: any doctrine would equally do, provided it is a part of a disagreement. Why does Sextus mention Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον (and Dicaearchus and the τινὲς κατὰ Δημόκριτον)? Because their views are remarkable, if not straightforwardly paradoxical, whereas placing intellect somewhere inside the body was such an obvious option as not to require any attribution and further qualification. Thus, reporting the views of Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον and of the other philosophers named enables Sextus to urge disagreement even on matters which otherwise one would take for granted.

As far as *M.* 7.349 is concerned, a comparison with the parallel passage at Tertullian *De anima* 15 shows that Sextus and Tertullian, directly or indirectly, depend on the same source, except that Tertullian gives a complete list of all different point of views concerning the ruling-part-of-the-soul, and does not just dwell upon the most peculiar ones.

So you must not suppose, with Heraclitus, that this sovereign faculty of which we are talking lies outside; nor with Moschion, that it floats about through the whole body; nor with Plato, that it is enclosed in the head; nor with Xenophanes, that it culminates in the crown of the head; nor that it reposes in the brain, according to the opinion of Hippocrates; nor around the basis of the brain, as Herophilus thought; nor in the membranes thereof, as Strato and Erasistratus said; nor in the space between the eyebrows, as Strato the Physicist held; nor within the enclosure of the breast, according to Epicurus.²³⁴

²³³ οὕτως ἐχρῆν καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν, εἴπερ διακριτικὴ ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς καὶ τοῦ ψεύδους, πολλῷ πρότερον τῇ ἐαυτῆς φύσει συνεπιβάλλειν δι' ἣν, οὐσίᾳ τῇ ἐξ ἧς ἐστὶ, τόπω τῷ ἐν ᾧ πέφυκε, τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν. οὐ πάνυ δέ γε τὰ τοιαῦτα συνορᾶν δύναται, εἴγε οἱ μὲν μηδὲν φασὶν εἶναι αὐτὴν παρὰ τὸ πῶς ἔχον σῶμα, καθάπερ ὁ Δικαίαρχος, οἱ δὲ εἶναι μὲν ἔλεξαν, οὐκ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ δὲ τόπῳ περιέχεσθαι, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος, ὡς Αἰνισίδημος κατὰ Ἡράκλειτον, οἱ δὲ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ σώματι, καθάπερ τινὲς κατὰ Δημόκριτον, οἱ δὲ ἐν μέρει τοῦ σώματος, ὧν πάλιν πολυσχιδεῖς εἰσὶν αἱ γνώμαι. καὶ οἱ μὲν διαφέρειν αὐτὴν τῶν αἰσθήσεων, ὡς οἱ πλείους, οἱ δὲ αὐτὴν εἶναι τὰς αἰσθήσεις, καθάπερ διὰ τινων ὁπῶν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων προκύπτουσιν, ἧς στάσεως ἤρξε Στράτων τε ὁ φυσικὸς καὶ Αἰνισίδημος. οὐκ ἄρα κριτήριόν ἐστιν ἡ διάνοια.

²³⁴ *Ut neque extrinsecus agitari putet principale istud secundum Heraclitum, neque per totum corpus ventilari secundum Moschionem, neque in capite concludi secundum Platonem, neque in vertice potius praesidere secundum Xenocraten, neque in cerebro cubare secundum Hippocraten, sed nec circa cerebri fundamentum, ut Herophilus, nec in membranulis, ut*

Tertullian's list of those who locate the ruling-part-of-the-soul in a specific part of the body finds significant parallels in Aetius' chapter on the ruling-part-of-the-soul at 4.5.1-10. This suggests that Tertullian's list is ultimately based on the same doxographical handbook of the late Hellenistic age on which Aetius also depends, the so-called *Vetusta Placita*. However, Tertullian also incorporates medical material which cannot have been found there in its entirety.²³⁵ Since Tertullian's direct source is the physician Soranus of Ephesus (early second century AD), one might hypothesise that Soranus is the one who updated that handbook with more recent medical material. I shall return to the question soon.

Sextus' own account, by contrast, is sketchy, and *prima facie* does not give any clue as to the nature of his source. However, on closer inspection, Sextus too shows that he is drawing on a doxographical source which incorporates recent medical material. Sextus contrasts Aenesidemus' position with that of 'someone following Democritus' (τινὲς κατὰ Δημόκριτον). The indefinite pronoun *τινὲς* suggests that Sextus has here cut out the reference to an obscure thinker. Tertullian identifies this thinker with the physician Moschion. One may suppose that Sextus deleted the reference to Moschion in favour of the generic *τινὲς*, because his readers were not acquainted with this physician.²³⁶

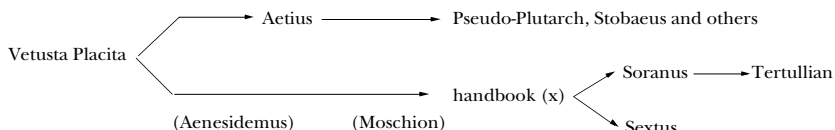
Thus, Sextus' source contained the same material that we find in Tertullian, not only the report on Aenesidemus. This suggests that Sextus' source is either Tertullian's own, Soranus, or an earlier author on whom Soranus too depends. The former case is ruled out by the fact that Soranus' topic in his treatise *On the Soul* is the soul

Strato et Erasistratus, nec in superciliorum meditullio, ut Strato Physicus, nec in tota lorica pectoris, ut Epicurus.

²³⁵ At least, on chronological grounds, the report on Moschion, who lived in the late first century AD. The same consideration applies to the report on Aenesidemus. Aetius associates Asclepiades and Dicaearchus as regards the incorporeality of the soul at 4.2.7-8, but neither Asclepiades nor Dicaearchus is mentioned in the chapter concerning the ruling-part-of-the-soul. It is possible that the *Vetusta Placita* did mention Asclepiades and Dicaearchus, but that the reference has not survived in the extant Aetius-derived sources. Mansfeld (1989) argues that some early Hellenistic material which is found in Aetius and Soranus goes back already to the third-century BC archetype of the *Vetusta Placita*, which Mansfeld calls *Vetustissima Placita*. Nothing of my argument, however, turns upon assessment of the early development of doxography.

²³⁶ Presumably Tertullian's readers were not acquainted with Moschion either, but it is Tertullian's procedure in his arguments to provide as many examples and references as possible.

alone, whereas Sextus' doxographical reports on Aenesidemus' Heraclitus cover several topics of the philosophical agenda, and the principle of parsimony suggests that Sextus derives all of his reports from one and the same source. Thus, both Sextus and Soranus/Tertullian depend on an earlier, common source, which perhaps was a revised version of the *Vetusta Placita*, and which is datable to the end of the first century AD, after Moschion and before Soranus. The relationship between the different authors involved can be represented through the following stemma:



As it happens, the dating which is attributable to this doxographical handbook (x) agrees with the chronology of the source from which Sextus and Diogenes derive their reports on Aenesidemus' criterion of commonly agreed appearances (see above ch. I.2), and this encourages the hypothesis that it is in fact one and the same source who incorporated Aenesidemus' Heraclitus into earlier doxographical material, and on whom Soranus, Sextus and Diogenes are all depending. Furthermore, the reference to Moschion suggests that this source was familiar with contemporary medical literature.

The original report concerning Aenesidemus and Moschion in (x) could be reassembled roughly in the following way: ὁ μὲν Αἰνησίδημος κατὰ Ἡράκλειτον φησιν ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος *agitari principale*, ὁ δὲ *Moschion* κατὰ Δημόκριτον φησιν ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ σώματι *ventilari*. The formula κατὰ + the accusative is used to describe both the relationship between Aenesidemus and Heraclitus and that between Moschion and Democritus. Therefore, if the meaning of this formula in the case of Moschion can be recovered, we will also be in a position to assess its meaning in the case of Aenesidemus, and thus to bring speculations on the matter to an end.²³⁷

²³⁷ This consideration is already found in Barnes (1988), p. 261 n. 75, except that Barnes fails to identify Sextus' τινες with Tertullian's Moschion, and therefore his claim that the τινες κατὰ Δημόκριτον mentioned by Sextus must be exegetes of Democritus, rather than themselves Democriteans, remained purely speculative.

Fortunately, we do have some information about Moschion. He was not a follower of Democritus in the ordinary sense of this word. He was a follower of the physician Asclepiades of Bithynia (*fl.* second century BC).²³⁸ It is thus not surprising if Moschion's account of the soul κατὰ Δημόκριτον does not agree with Democritus' positing the ruling-part-of-the-soul in the head, as reported in regular doxographical material.²³⁹ It agrees, rather, with the view of his mentor Asclepiades, who made negative claims about the location of the ruling-part-of-the-soul,²⁴⁰ to which Moschion gives a positive twist.²⁴¹

Thus, in the case of Moschion the formula κατὰ Δημόκριτον indicates that we are dealing with a re-interpretation of Democritus in the light of Moschion's own view. It is likely that the formula takes a comparable meaning in the case of Aenesidemus κατὰ Ἡράκλειτον as well, especially since this meaning agrees with the conclusion we arrived at in the previous chapter, i. e. that the criterion of that-which-appears-to-us-all is an interpretation of Heraclitus' common λόγος in the light of Aenesidemus' Scepticism.

Having established the doxographical status of the report, I shall now discuss the philosophical meaning of Aenesidemus' locating the mind/ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us. A first, preliminary, question concerns whether it is the ruling-part-of-the-soul or the 'mind' that is under discussion. Sextus speaks of διάνοια. Tertullian speaks of *principale animae* (ἡγεμονικόν). The two terms may, but need not, have the same reference. For instance, according to the main ancient interpretation, animals do have a ruling-part-of-the-soul, even though they are not endowed with a mind proper. Commentators usually trust Sextus, on the ground that he was affiliated to the same school as Aenesidemus, and thus supposedly better acquainted with him than Tertullian. However, in fact, both Sextus and Tertullian lists Aenesidemus within a *diaphonia* whose topic is the location of the

²³⁸ Gal., *De differentia pulsuum* 8.758 K.

²³⁹ Aetius 4.5.1.

²⁴⁰ Cael. Aur. MA 1.115: *regnum animae aliqua in parte corporis constitutum negat*; Calc. ch. 215 p. 229 W: *nullum locum certum definitumque principali animae parti dederunt*.

²⁴¹ In putting forward this idiosyncratic reading of Democritus, Moschion is presumably drawing on the interpretation that has Democritus identify νοεῖσθαι and αἰσθάνεσθαι, νοῦς and ψυχή. This identification, which stems from Aristotle and Peripatetic historiography (Arist. DA 409b2 and Theophr. *Sens.* 58), appears to have had a certain fortune among physicians, to the point that Tertullian argues for it, with explicit reference to Democritus, in a part of his account of the soul which he has derived from medical material (DA 12; cf. DA 2).

ruling-part-of-the-soul, a very well-established topic in doxographical literature. It is therefore most likely that this was the matter originally under review in the source shared by Tertullian/Soranus and Sextus, the doxographical handbook (x). Sextus replaces ἡγεμονικόν with διάνοια, presumably because his argument at 7.348-354 concerns intellect as opposed to sensation, and therefore requires such a shift of subject.

Two solutions were given in antiquity to the question of where the ruling-part-of-the-soul is located: one places it in the head (a view doxographically attributed to Hippocrates, Plato, and most physicians), the other places it in the heart (a view attributed to Aristotle, Diocles, the Stoics and the Epicureans). It was normally assumed that the ruling-part-of-the-soul, if it exists, has to be in one of these two locations, or at least somewhere inside the body. For how could the ruling-part-of-the-soul rule the body and the other parts of the soul, while being outside us? Aenesidemus' solution to the question is, thus, definitely peculiar. Certainly it is not comparable to any traditional solution. Is it, then, a way of making fun of these? It is impossible to answer this question unless one more closely examines the implications of Aenesidemus' view. The primary consequence of locating the the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us is, of course, to deny the existence of a ruling-part-of-the-soul inside us. As we saw, this denial was held by some philosophers and physicians (Tert. *DA* 15). Among them Asclepiades, "second to none in the art of medicine and also familiar with philosophy" (as Antiochus describes him at Sext. *Emp. M.* 7.201), is the most eminent and presumably also the one with whom Aenesidemus was best acquainted. This is the way in which Galen at *Nat. Fac.* 2.29 presents Asclepiades:

Some of these people [those who deny that matter is continuous] have even expressly declared that the soul possesses no reasoning faculty, but that we are led like cattle by the affections of our senses, and are unable to refuse or dissent from anything [...] With their views we have dealt at greater length in another work in which we discuss the doctrines of Asclepiades the physician.²⁴²

²⁴² ἔνιοι δ' αὐτῶν καὶ ῥητῶς ἀπεφήναντο μηδεμίαν εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς δύναμιν, ἣ λογίζομεθα, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἄγεσθαι παθῶν ἡμᾶς καθάπερ βοσκήματα πρὸς μηδὲν ἀνανεῦσαι μηδ' ἀντειπεῖν δυναμένους [...] ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡμεῖς μὲν ἰδίᾳ δι' ἑτέρων γραμμάτων ἐπὶ πλέον ἐσκεψάμεθα περὶ τῶν Ἀσκληπιάδου τοῦ ἱατροῦ σκοποῦμενοι δογμάτων.

The work that Galen devoted to discussing Asclepiades' doctrines is sadly lost. However, we do have other reports in Galen to the effect that Asclepiades denied the existence of higher psychic functions: "All men think that there are such things as intelligence, memory and judgement, but Asclepiades attempted to dismiss these things, holding that they do not exist at all".²⁴³ In fact, Asclepiades never went so far as to deny that humans think. Rather, he aimed at providing a unified, 'reductionist', account of our entire psychic life in terms of sensation expanded, the soul itself being nothing more than an epiphenomenon of the working of our sense-organs.²⁴⁴

So far so good, but why should Aenesidemus sympathise with those who deny the existence of a ruling-part-of-the-soul? The point, I believe, is that, by the criteria of Hellenistic philosophy, dismissing the ruling-part-of-the-soul means dismissing the foundation of any doctrine which involves rational assessment. Accordingly, Sextus reports that, in Asclepiades' view, reasoning has no cognitive access to things.²⁴⁵ Once rational assessment is abolished, only bare sensory data remain, as Aenesidemus maintains. It does not matter whether or not Asclepiades himself arrived at this conclusion.²⁴⁶ What does matter is that his philosophy of mind provides a suitable foundation for it, making Aenesidemus' Sceptical argument complete: we cannot judge appearances, because there is no rational power capable of doing so inside us. True, the Sceptics normally refrain from invoking any such theoretical foundation, and are happy simply to make the point that any rational judgement of sense-reports is unreliable. Nonetheless, it is not surprising if Aenesidemus should at least sympathise with the idea that there is no ruling-part-of-the-soul, and attribute it to his Scepticising Heraclitus.

However, the problem is not solved yet: Aenesidemus does not merely deny the existence of a ruling-part-of-the-soul inside us. He

²⁴³ Gal., *Hipp. off. med.*, 18b.660: πεπεισμένοι δέ εἰσιν ὡσαύτως ἅπαντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι... καὶ νοῦν καὶ μνήμην καὶ προαίρεσιν [εἶναι], ἃ πρὸς ἄλλοις πολλοῖς ἀνατρέπειν ἐπεχείρησεν Ἀσκληπιάδης ὡς οὐκ ὄντα.

²⁴⁴ Cael. Aur. MA 1.14.115.

²⁴⁵ Sext. Emp. M. 7.202: ἄλλος δέ τις, ἐν ἰατρικῇ μὲν οὐδενὸς δεύτερος, ἀπτόμενος δὲ καὶ φιλοσοφίας, ἐπείθετο τὰς μὲν αἰσθήσεις ὄντως καὶ ἀληθῶς ἀντιλήψεις εἶναι, λόγῳ δὲ μηδὲν ὅλως ἡμᾶς καταλαμβάνειν. ἔοικε γὰρ διὰ τούτων ὁ Ἀντίοχος τὴν προειρημένην τιθέναι στάσιν καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδην τὸν ἱατρὸν αἰνίττεσθαι, ἀναιροῦντα [...] τὸ ἡγεμονικόν.

²⁴⁶ The very fact that the principles of things are for Asclepiades intelligible (λόγῳ θεωρητά) suggests that he did not. A comprehensive account of his epistemology and philosophy of mind is still missing and badly needed.

goes so far as to place it outside. And one may wonder why, if Aenesidemus' point was to dismiss the ruling-part-of-the-soul, he did not put it in more straightforward terms. In order to tackle this question, we should first of all bear in mind that we are dealing with an interpretation of someone else's doctrine, and Aenesidemus could not therefore foist any idea he liked onto Heraclitus, but had to put it in such a way as to match what Heraclitus said (or, at least, what he thought Heraclitus said). Thus, the question arises what Heraclitean doctrine made Aenesidemus place the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside the body.

We need not embark on speculation, since Sextus himself provides the texts which appear to have originated the report on the location of the ruling-part-of-the-soul according to Heraclitus. One text is at *M.* 8.286: "Heraclitus says that human beings are not intelligent; only that-which-surrounds-us thinks".²⁴⁷ The other one is at 7.128-131:

But what this [the common and divine Reason] is must be explained concisely. It is a favourite tenet of our Physicist that that-which-surrounds-us is rational and intelligent. Long before [Heraclitus], Homer had expressed the same view when he says: "As is the day which upon them is brought by the sire immortal, so are the minds of mortal men". Archilocus too says that the thoughts men think are "Such as the day which Zeus doth bring about". And the same thing has also been said by Euripides: "Whatever you are, necessity of nature or mankind's intelligence, I invoke you, inapprehensible Zeus" [...] Hence, that-which-appears-to-us-all is trustworthy (for it is perceived by the divine and common Reason), but that which affects one person alone is, for the opposite reason, untrustworthy.²⁴⁸

It is hardly questionable that the two passages derive from the one and the same account of Heraclitus: not only are the points they make complementary, but there are also terminological echoes between the two. In neither of them is Aenesidemus named. However, the account of Heraclitus which is given in the second passage

²⁴⁷ ὁ Ἡράκλειτός φησι τὸ μὴ εἶναι λογικὸν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, μόνον δ' ὑπάρχειν φρενῆρες τὸ περιέχον.

²⁴⁸ τίς δ' ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ κοινὸς καὶ θεῖος λόγος, συντόμως ὑποδεικτέον. ἀρέσκει γὰρ τῷ φυσικῷ [τῷ Ἡρακλείτῳ] τὸ περιέχον ἡμᾶς λογικὸν τε ὄν καὶ φρενῆρες. ἐμφαίνει δὲ τὸ τοιοῦτο πολὺ πρόσθεν Ὅμηρος εἰπὼν· τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων, οἷον ἐπ' ἡμαρ ἄγῃσι πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε. καὶ Ἀρχίλοχος δὲ φησι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοιαῦτα φρονεῖν ὅποιον Ζεὺς ἐφ' ἡμέρην ἄγει. εἴρηται δὲ καὶ τῷ Εὐριπίδῃ τὸ αὐτό· ὅστις ποτ' εἰ σὺ δυστόπαστος εἰσιδεῖν Ζεὺς, εἴτ' ἀνάγκη φύσεος εἴτε νοῦς βροτῶν, ἐπευξάμην σε [...] ὅθεν τὸ μὲν κοινῇ πᾶσι φαινόμενον, τοῦτ' εἶναι πιστόν (τῷ κοινῷ γὰρ καὶ θεῷ λόγῳ λαμβάνεται), τὸ δὲ τινι μόνῳ προσπίπτον ἀπιστον ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν αἰτίαν.

contains distinctive elements of Aenesidemus' interpretation of him, most notably the reference to 'that-which-appears-to-us-all'. Thus either Sextus' source is Aenesidemus himself, or it is the same author which Aenesidemus used as a basis for his interpretation of Heraclitus. I shall return to this question later, at which point I shall also provide a detailed analysis of *M.* 7.126-134 (ch. V.1-3). My concern now is merely to understand how Aenesidemus might have arrived at the claim that the ruling-part-of-the-soul is, according to Heraclitus, outside our body.

The first passage, which provides a slightly different formulation of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' claim that the ruling-part-of-the-soul is outside our body, suggests that that-which-surrounds-us (τὸ περιέχον) is the place in which to locate our ruling-part. The way in which that-which-surrounds-us is supposed to 'think' on our behalf is explained in the second passage with the aid of Hom. *Od.* 18.136-137 ("as it is the day which upon them is brought by the sire immortal, so are the minds of mortal men") and its imitation, Archilochus fr. 70 (the thoughts men think are "such as the day which Zeus brings about"). The idea appears to be that our thoughts are merely a by-product of what we happen to see and deal with, and that we are incapable of elaborating on, and going beyond, the affections we undergo.²⁴⁹ It is suggested that Euripides *Troad.* 885, in which Zeus is presented as our decision-maker ('mind'), and identified with physical necessity, is to be read along the same lines.

Thus, these passages offer an interpretation of Heraclitus in the light of a model for explaining our psychic life which denies the self any active role — a model which Bruno Snell described as preceding the discovery of the mind, and one with which the Sceptics themselves sympathised, at least to judge from Diogenes' quotation of the same Archilochean imitation of Homer among the antecedents of Scepticism at 9.71. An echo of this exegesis of Hom. *Od.* 18.136-137 has come down to us through Eustathius, a twelfth-century Byzantine commentator on Homer:

"Such is the mind of men as is the day which God brings about", that is, as are the affections that we undergo, such is our mind, which in

²⁴⁹ This reductionist reading of *Od.* 8.136 and Archil. Fr. 70 rests on the assumption that 'Zeus' here stands for an impersonal subject as in 'Zeus [= it] is raining', meaning that human beings think differently according to which day 'comes about'.

everything conforms to external things and shapes itself according to that which happens to take place.²⁵⁰

Aristotle *DA* 427a 22-28 formalises the philosophical implications of this idea:

And the ancients maintain that thinking and sensing are one and the same thing. So that Empedocles asserted: “For according to that-which-is-present to them doth thought increase in men”, and elsewhere “So it always happens to them to think differently” [...] The Homeric verse means the same thing: “As is the day which upon them is brought by the sire immortal, so are the minds of mortal men”. All these people believe that thinking is a physical process like sensing.²⁵¹

We learn from Simplicius (*In Arist. De anima* vol. 11 p. 202) that the expression ‘that-which-is-present’ (τὸ παρὸν) in the Empedoclean verse should be understood as equivalent to τὸ αἰσθητόν, thus giving: “human beings change their mind in relation to that which they happen to sense”, and thus bringing the argument full circle.

The same interpretation of early epistemology is advanced by Aristotle at *Metaph.* 1009b 12- 1010a 1:

And in general it is because they suppose that thinking is sensing, and sensing is a physical alteration, that they say that that-which-appears to the senses is necessarily true; for it is on these grounds that both Empedocles and Democritus and practically all the others have become obsessed by such opinions as these. For Empedocles says that those who change their bodily condition change their thought: “For according to that which is present to them doth thought increase in men” [...] The reason why these men hold this view is that they investigated the truth about things, and came to the conclusion that reality is confined to sense-objects alone.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων, οἷον ἐπ’ ἡμᾶρ ἄγῃσι θεός· τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν ὅποια ἂν εἶη τὰ προσπίπτοντα, τοιοῦτος ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ νοῦς ὅλως τοῖς πράγμασι συνεξομοιούμενος καὶ πρὸς τὰ παραπίπτοντα σχηματίζομενος.

²⁵¹ Καὶ οἱ γε ἀρχαῖοι τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ταῦτόν εἶναι φασιν. ὥσπερ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς εἶρηκε· πρὸς παρεὸν γὰρ μῆτις ἀέξεται ἀνθρώποισιν· καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις· ὅθεν σφισιν αἰεὶ καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν ἄλλοῖα παρίσταται. [...] τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ τούτοις βούλεται καὶ τὸ Ὁμήρου· τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων· πάντες γὰρ οὗτοι τὸ νοεῖν σωματικὸν ὥσπερ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ὑπολαμβάνουσιν.

²⁵² ὅλως δὲ διὰ τὸ ὑπολαμβάνειν φρονήσιν μὲν τὴν αἴσθησιν, ταύτην εἶναι ἀλλοίωσιν, τὸ φαινόμενον κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀληθὲς εἶναι φασιν· ἐκ τούτων γὰρ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ Δημόκριτος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν ἕκαστος τοιαύταις δόξαις γεγέννηται ἔνοχοι. καὶ γὰρ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς μεταβάλλοντας τὴν ἑξὶν μεταβάλλειν φησὶ τὴν φρόνησιν· πρὸς παρεὸν γὰρ μῆτις ἀέξεται ἀνθρώποισιν. [...] Αἴτιον δὲ τῆς δόξης τούτοις ὅτι περὶ τῶν ὄντων μὲν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐσκόπουν, τὰ δ’ ὄντα ὑπέλαβον εἶναι τὰ αἰσθητὰ μόνον.

Homer is no longer mentioned in the *Metaphysics* passage, but the repetition of Empedocles fr. 106 confirms that the reference is to the position which Aristotle attributes to Homer in the *De anima* passage, and which he regards as the premise of the proto-Aenesidemian argument that “appearances are true, and therefore all things are equally false and true, because they do not appear the same to all, nor always the same to the same person” (*Metaph.* 1011a 28-33). Aristotle also attributes to the Presocratics the assumption that sense-objects alone are real, an assumption which finds important parallels in Aenesidemus. Finally, Aristotle at *Metaph.* 1012a 33-35 brings in Heraclitus and his claim that one-way predications are incomplete, presenting it as a necessary consequence of this reductionist account of the soul and knowledge.

These echoes between Aristotle and Aenesidemus make it tempting to think that Aenesidemus’ interpretation of Heraclitus was influenced by Aristotle’s account of Presocratic philosophy of mind, either directly or through intermediate Peripatetic sources (Strato?). However, I shall not develop this hypothesis, because it would carry us away from our main subject. For my present purpose, it is enough to observe that the mainstream line of philosophical interpretation of the verses quoted by Sextus at *M.* 7.128 is along reductionist lines. If these verses provide a reliable standard for understanding Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus, then his placing our ruling-part-of-the-soul in that-which-surrounds-us does not anticipate science-fiction motifs such as Orwell’s Big Brother, but is meant to attribute the role of directing (ἡγεῖσθαι) our thoughts and actions to external stimuli and the external environment in general. It is on this basis that Sextus at *M.* 7.129-134 identifies the universal λόγος surrounding us with the world accessed by sensation, which is common to all those who are awake, and concludes that, according to Heraclitus, partaking in this universal reason provides us with a criterion of truth. I shall examine later the precise way in which this creative reading of Heraclitus develops. For my present purpose, I shall conclude observing that Aenesidemus’ locating the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον is tantamount to denying the existence of a ruling-part-of-the-soul, and that the different formulation can be explained in terms of attempting at establishing a link with Heraclitus’ motif of universal Reason.

IV.2 *Mind and the Senses* (Sext. Emp. 8.350; Tert. DA 14)

The idea which underpins locating the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us, that thinking is merely a by-product of sensation, is expressed in our second ‘Heraclitean’ text, *M.* 7.350:

Some people maintain that the mind and the senses are different things, so does the majority, others maintain that they are not, the mind stretching out as through certain pipe-holes of the sense-organs (καθάπερ διὰ τινῶν ὀπῶν τῶν αἰσθητήριων προκύπτουσιν). Strato the Physicist and Aenesidemus were the initiators of this opinion.²⁵³

The qualification καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον is missing. However, the relevance of this testimony to Aenesidemus’ interpretation of Heraclitus is secured by the parallel in Tertullian *De anima* 14: “These people [Strato and Aenesidemus and Heraclitus] advocate the unity of the soul, which [...] stretches out in different ways along our sense-organs in the same way as the breath stretches out along the holes of a pipe”.²⁵⁴

The matter under discussion is the relationship between the mind and the senses. Aenesidemus καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον maintains that there is no difference between thinking and sensing, because one and the same mind is involved in both activities. Less clear is the argument offered in support of this claim, that the mind ‘stretches out’ through our sense-organs. This theory is referred to by Sextus once again at *M.* 7.364:

And even if we assume that the mind stretches out through the sensory channels as through pipe-holes (διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων ὥσπερ τινῶν ὀπῶν προκύπτουσιν) and makes contact with the external objects apart from the senses placed in front of it, even on this assumption the theory will be found no less untenable. For the mind that apprehends the real objects in this way must apprehend the real objects as self-evident; but, as we shall establish, nothing is self-evident; therefore it is not possible to grasp the truth of the real objects.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ See above n. 3 end for the original Greek.

²⁵⁴ *Ipsi unitatem animae tuentur, quae [...] per sensuality variis modis emicet velut flatus in calamo per cavernas.* I shall return to Tertullian later.

²⁵⁵ Κἂν υποθέμεθα δὲ τὴν διάνοιαν διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων ὥσπερ τινῶν ὀπῶν προκύπτουσιν καὶ χωρὶς τῶν προκειμένων αὐτῆς αἰσθήσεων τοῖς ἐκτὸς πράγμασι προσβάλλουσιν, ἄπορος οὐδὲν ἦσσαν καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο ἡ υπόθεσις εὐρεθήσεται. δεῖ γὰρ τὴν οὕτω τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἀντιλαμβανομένην διάνοιαν ὡς ἐναργῶν τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι, οὐδὲν δὲ ἐστὶν ἐναργές, ὡς παραστήσομεν· οὐκ ἄρα δυνατόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις ἀληθὲς λαβεῖν.

Strato's and Aenesidemus' account of sensation is invoked in support of the hypothesis that our mind may access external objects without the intermediation of the senses (χωρὶς τῶν προκειμένων αὐτῆς αἰσθήσεων). Whatever Sextus has in mind, the conclusion he draws is clearly different from that which he attributes to Strato and Aenesidemus at *M.* 7 350. Nevertheless, this passage is important because it tells us that the metaphorical 'holes' through which our mind allegedly passes on her way out of the body are 'sensory channels' (πόροι αἰσθητικοί). The expression occurs in Sceptical literature on only two other occasions, and, moreover, in passages incorporating material of Aenesidemus, or at any rate related to him: Diog. L. 9.81: "The third trope of suspension of judgement depends on the differences between our sensory channels" (παρὰ τὰς τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων διαφοράς), and Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.130 and *passim*, when expounding Heraclitus' criterion of truth: "on waking our mind stretches out again through the sensory channels, as it were through windows" (διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων ὥσπερ διὰ τινων θυρίδων προκύψας). Therefore, the expression is likely to go back to Aenesidemus himself. Sextus' αἰσθητήρια at *M.* 7.350 is a doxographical simplification.

As a matter of fact, the complete expression πόροι αἰσθητικοί is rare not only in Sceptical material, but in the entire Greek literature. A research on the *TLG* to investigate the usage of the expression shows that the only occurrences outside Sceptical literature are in Galen's discussion of the olfactory apparatus and in another medical author, Aetius Amidenus. Thus, in using this expression, Aenesidemus is not relying on a common usage: an expression which is only employed by four authors out of thousands is technical terminology.

The occurrence in Aetius Amidenus is probably to be discounted. For the reference is not to perceptive channels, but to *perceptible* channels, as opposed to non-perceptible ones.²⁵⁶ One may wonder whether the text is corrupt, and whether αἰσθητικούς is to be emended to αἰσθητούς, thus doing full justice to the Greek language. The Galen occurrence is more interesting. The expression occurs in the work devoted to smell (*De instrumento odoratus*). Some people claim that there are 'sensory channels' connecting the nostrils to the brain, and thus enabling us to sense odours. The reference is, thus, to the olfactory nerves. Galen denies that any such channel exists.²⁵⁷ For, in

²⁵⁶ Aetius Amidenus 2. 5-6: καὶ τοὺς αἰσθητικούς πόρους καὶ τοὺς ἀδήλους κτλ.

²⁵⁷ Gal. *De instrumento odoratus*, 2.878: τοὺς εἰρημένους πόρους ἀδύνατον ὑπάρχειν. The identification of these channels with the nostrils is ruled out by the fact

his view, only the optic nerves are hollow and thus ‘channels’; all other nerves are not: for sensation is a qualitative alteration of the body of the nerves, and requires no actual circulation of pneuma.²⁵⁸ The polemic is, it seems, against Herophilus and Erasistratus, the discoverers of the nervous system in the third-century BC Alexandria, who had the nerves carry pneuma, and who called them ‘channels’,²⁵⁹ or at least against late followers of them. Be that as it may, the *De instrumentu odoratus* passage provides evidence that the usage area of the expression is physiology and medicine.

The medical pedigree of the expression is confirmed by the Latin physician Caelius Aurelianus (sixth-seventh century AD). The most telling occurrence is at *MA* 1.57. A ‘Rationalist’ doctor is the speaker, arguing that the ruling-part-of-the-soul is located where the nerves originate: “You will learn wherefrom the sensory channels (*sensuales viae*) depart by opening the body, an operation which the Greeks call anatomy (*quasi quidem per apertionem, quam Graeci anatomiam dicunt, didiceritis sensuales vias inde sumere exordium*)”. The expression *sensuales vias* turns up again at *MA* 1.14, where Caelius reports Asclepiades’ account of phrenitis, described as a disease of the cerebral membranes in the area of the sensory channels connecting the brain to the peripheral sensors.²⁶⁰ Here again the reference appears to be to

that they are located under the membrane of the nostrils: ὁ δὲ κατ’ αὐτοὺς [τὰς μυκτῆρας] χιτῶν, ἐν ᾧ τοὺς αἰσθητικοὺς πόρους ὑποτιθέμεθα κτλ

²⁵⁸ *PHP* 7.4.1; *ibidem* 20-21.

²⁵⁹ Gal. *De usu partium*, 3.813: τῶν γὰρ ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀπ’ ἐγκεφάλου κατιόντων νεύρων τῶν αἰσθητικῶν, ἃ δὴ καὶ πόρους ὀνόμαζεν Ἡρόφιλος, ὅτι μόνοις αὐτοῖς αἰσθητὰ καὶ σαφεῖς εἰσιν αἱ τοῦ πνεύματος ὁδοί. Gal. *De symptomatum causis*, 7.89: τὸ ἀπ’ ἐγκεφάλου καταφερόμενον ἐπὶ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν νεῦρον, ὃ δὴ καὶ πόρον ὀνομάζουσιν οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἡρόφιλον, ὅτι τοῦτο μόνον φανερόν ἐστι τὸ τῆρμα. These texts seem to suggest that Herophilus described the optic nerve only as a πόρος, regarding this nerve alone as carrying pneuma. See, however, Solmsen (1961), p. 187 (= Solmsen (1968), p. 572), and von Staden (1989), p. 237. There is no textual evidence that Erasistratus used the term πόροι, but the idea is there. See e.g. Rufus *Part. corp. hum.* 71-5: ‘According to Erasistratus there are two kinds of nerves, sensory and motor nerves; the beginnings of the sensory nerves, which are hollow [= contain pneuma], you could find in the meninges’. The identification of the physicians attacked by Galen with Herophilus and Erasistratus is advanced by De Lacy (the *CMG* editor of Galen’s *PHP*) p. 678.

²⁶⁰ The expression also occurs in Caelius’ refutation of Praxagoras’ treatment of dropsy at *MC* 3.143: ‘Praxagoras [...] stimulates vomiting not only on an empty stomach, but even after evening meals, and he gives the patient a great deal to drink; but both these procedures cause the sensory channels to be congested (*ex quibus sensuales viae implentur*)’. The report is very condensed, but it at least lends support to the hypothesis that the expression connotes the nerves, as these had been described by Hellenistic physicians: hollow and carrying pneuma.

nerves.²⁶¹ No other occurrence of *viae sensuales* is found in Latin literature.

If one leaves aside the complete expression πόροι αἰσθητικοί, the term usually adopted for indicating the nerves is πόροι alone, “a word under which these paths had been familiar to Aristotle and others long before nerves were identified as peculiar or specific entities”.²⁶² The first author to use the term in this meaning is the Presocratic Alcmeon.²⁶³ It is possible, although not certain, that he already identified the substance carried by these channels with pneuma.²⁶⁴ The idea that there are specific ‘channels’, other than blood-vessels and filled with pneuma, which allow sensation is also found in Aristotle,²⁶⁵ and developed by his pupils.²⁶⁶ It is from the Peripatus that Herophilus and Erasistratus derive their paradigm for explaining the functioning of the nerves as channels carrying pneuma. Detailed accounts of sensation based on channels are found in later medical authors: Vindicianus refers to certain *viae* which allegedly transform the pneuma circulating in them, so as to make it apt to sense five different classes of objects, corresponding to the five senses.²⁶⁷ A

²⁶¹ Alternatively, these *viae* are the void interstices between one corpuscle and the other (as the *viae* referred to at MA 1.105 are: *fieri etiam vias ex complexione corpusculorum intellectu sensas*). However, describing void interstices as ‘perceptive’ (*sensuales*) sounds odd. Moreover, Caelius, while rephrasing Asclepiades’ definition of *alienatio* (a mental impairment which accompanies *phrenitis*), presents the expression πόροι αἰσθητικοί as a synonym of αἰσθητήρια (...in sensibus, hoc est in sensualibus vis...), and this description hardly applies to void interstices.

²⁶² Solmsen (1961), p. 187.

²⁶³ See Theophr. *Sens.* 26: ἀπάσας τὰς αἰσθήσεις συνηρτησθαι πως πρὸς τὸν ἐγκέφαλον· διὸ καὶ πηροῦσθαι κινουμένου καὶ μεταλλάττοντος τὴν χώραν· ἐπιλαμβάνειν γὰρ τοὺς πόρους, δι’ ὧν αἱ αἰσθήσεις.

²⁶⁴ Calcidius *In Plat. Timaeum*, ch. 246 p. 256-257 W. speaks of *spiritus naturalis* (probably translating πνεῦμα φυσικόν or σύμφυτον), but he couples Alcmeon with Callisthenes the Peripatetic and Herophilus, and may be retrojecting their views onto Alcmeon; see Lloyd (1975).

²⁶⁵ Arist. *De gen. animalium*, 744a, 1-2: τὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αἰσθητήριόν ἐστι, ὥσπερ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα αἰσθητήρια, ἐπὶ πόρων. and *ibidem* 781a, 20-22: οἱ πόροι τῶν αἰσθητηρίων πάντων, ὥσπερ εἴρηται ἐν τοῖς περὶ αἰσθήσεως, τείνουσι πρὸς τὴν καρδίαν. At GA 743b 36 - 744a 6 Aristotle speaks of pneuma carried by the channels of smell and hearing. The adjective ‘connate’ (σύμφυτον), which qualifies this pneuma, suggests that the reference is not to external air penetrating ears and nostrils. The reference is to the material agent of sensation, which elsewhere Aristotle compares with aether, the substance of the stars (GA 736b 33 - 737a 1). It must be added, however, that Aristotle is ambivalent as to whether pneuma or blood provides the soul with its vehicle.

²⁶⁶ Calcidius ch. 246 counts Callisthenes *auditor Aristotelis* among the discoverers of the optic duct, together with the anatomist Herophilus and Alcmeon.

²⁶⁷ Vind. c. 18; p. 219 FSA.

similar argument appears in Calcidius' report on Asclepiades' account of sensation (he speaks of *meatus nervorum*).²⁶⁸

Thus, a closer consideration of the usage of the term πόροι, both alone and in connection with the adjective αἰσθητικοί, encourages the hypothesis that we are dealing with a well-established and technical way of referring to the nerves. Furthermore, the very description of the nerves as 'channels' presupposes the idea that pneuma circulates in them. It is unfortunate that our main source for Hellenistic medicine, Galen, reject the existence of any such channel, thus leaving us in the dark as to the details of the theory. His hostility, together with the fact that the vast majority of Hellenistic philosophers ignored the account of sensation based on channels, is the reason why modern scholarship has failed to acknowledge its diffusion and authority.

In philosophical literature the term πόροι also connotes the microscopic interstices between one particle and another, which were posited by Empedocles, Democritus and others in order to account for motion of bodies through bodies (e.g. light through air), and also to account for sensation, which they explained in terms of a certain 'symmetry' between the particulate arrangement of our sense-organs and that of the effluxes of matter from outside (ἀποφοραί).²⁶⁹ This other account of sensation focuses on the atomic process allegedly causing sensation, and is clearly different from the physiological account that we have been considering so far. The fact that πόροι are referred to in both contexts may sometime create difficulty when assessing the reference. Nonetheless, it is fairly reasonable to assume that 'channels' carrying the soul's pneuma from the ruling-part-of-the-soul to the peripheral sensors are not void interstices, but anatomical ducts.

The only philosopher known to us who appropriated the medical account of sensation centred on anatomical channels is Strato. This is by no mean surprising: Strato is a Peripatetic, indeed the head of the school in Herophilus' day, and he is based in Alexandria, where the discovery of the nerves is carried out. Evidence that Strato does appropriate that account is provided not only by Sextus, who associates

²⁶⁸ Calc. ch. 216.

²⁶⁹ Thus, for instance, sound-effluxes can only be heard, and not seen or smelled, because their particulate structure let them impinge only our auditory organs in such a way as to be noticeable to us.

him with Aenesidemus' Heraclitus, but, if Gottshalk is right, also by Cicero at *Tusc. Disp.* I 46 (= Strato T. 11 Gottschalk):

As not only natural philosophers (*physici*), but indeed also the physicians who had open and direct access to these things, teach, there are some kind of hollow channels (*viae perforatae*) connecting the seat of the mind to the eyes, the ears, the nostrils. Thus, even if our eyes and ears are open and in good physical shape, we neither see nor hear anything, when we are lost in thought or when we are ill, so that one can easily understand that it is our mind that sees and hears things, not those organs which are like the windows of our soul, and by means of which the mind cannot sense anything, unless it is present and functional.²⁷⁰

Strato is not named. However, he is alluded to by his nickname *physicus*. Cicero admittedly speaks of *physici*, but it may be merely a matter of style, or perhaps Cicero is referring to a group of philosophers who follow him. Be that as it may, there are close parallels between the Cicero passage and Strato's explicit fragments. The parallels are too close to be a matter of coincidence.²⁷¹

The *viae perforatae* which Cicero refers to as connecting the *sedes animi* to the peripheral sensors are the nerves discovered, and described as 'channels' of the soul's pneuma, by Herophilus and Erasistratus, to whom Cicero refers by *medici qui ista aperta et patefacta viderunt*. It is a periphrasis, but an unequivocal one, because human dissection in antiquity was performed only in Alexandria and only in the third century BC. The functioning of the nerves, as it was understood at the time, led Strato to the conclusion that the body as such is inert, and that the pneuma circulating in it is responsible for sensation. As he puts it, quoting Epicharmus' words: "The mind sees, the mind hears; all the other things (eyes and ears) are blind and deaf by themselves". The fact that one is less receptive of external stimuli when lost in thought demonstrates, in his view, that the mind cannot

²⁷⁰ *Nos enim ne nunc quidem oculis cernimus ea quae videmus; neque est enim ullus sensus in corpore sed, ut non physici solum docent, verum etiam medici qui ista aperta et patefacta viderunt, viae quasi quaedam sunt ad oculos, ad aures, ad naris a sede animi perforatae. itaque saepe aut cogitatione aut aliqua vi morbi impediti apertis atque integris et oculis et auribus nec videmus nec audimus, ut facile intellegi possit animum et videre et audire, non eas partes quae quasi fenestrae sint animi, quibus tamen sentire nihil queat mens, nisi id agat et adsit.*

²⁷¹ *Cogitatione [...] impediti nec videmus nec audimus* echoes Strato, Fr. 112 W: καὶ γὰρ γράμματα πολλάκις ἐπιπορευομένους τῇ ὄψει καὶ λόγοι προσπίπτοντες τῇ ἀκοῇ διαλανθάνουσιν ἡμᾶς καὶ διαφεύγουσι πρὸς ἑτέροις τὸν νοῦν ἔχοντας. Likewise *animum videre et audire, non eas partis quae quasi fenestrae sint animi* echoes the Epicharmus passage quoted by Strato in the same fragment: νοῦς ὄρῃ καὶ νοῦς ἀκούει, τὰλλα κωφὰ καὶ τυφλά. The identification is further argued by Gottshalk (1965), p. 163.

accomplish more than one job at the same time, probably on account of the insufficient pneuma available, thus suggesting that it is one and the same substance that performs all psychic functions.²⁷² Therefore, thinking is not an activity of the mind distinct from sensing.²⁷³ This is why Strato attributes reasoning not only to humans, but to all animals alike,²⁷⁴ thus dismissing the cornerstone of Aristotle's scale of beings.

Strato's view of the soul is also expounded by Tertullian, who attributes it to Aenesidemus and Heraclitus as well (Tert. *De anima* 14). The passage is parallel to Sextus' report on Aenesidemus at M. 7.350:

These people [Strato, Aenesidemus and Heraclitus] advocate the unity of the soul, which in their view is spread throughout the whole body and is everywhere one and the same, and yet it stretches out in different ways along our sense-organs in the same way as the breath stretches out along the holes of a pipe, being not so much divisible into different parts as dispensed in order to accomplish different jobs.²⁷⁵

The reference to Strato and Aenesidemus' Heraclitus follows a doxographical account of the positions held by other philosophers concerning the topic of how many 'parts' the soul has. Tertullian questions the appropriateness of speaking of 'parts': the soul, he argues, has no parts, but only different powers. Aristotle is invoked as an authority. However, Aristotle's solution is still insufficient for Tertullian. In his view, the soul's powers are reducible to differences in the processes which the psychic pneuma undergoes inside the body. It is in order to substantiate this point that Tertullian mentions Strato's and Aenesidemus' account of why sensation is fivefold, in spite of the soul's being one and the same. The idea is that the different shapes of the channels carrying psychic pneuma enable us to sense different qualities.²⁷⁶ To this effect, Tertullian compares our sense-apparatus with Archimedes' hydraulic organ, which produces a wide range of sounds out of one and the same breath, depending on

²⁷² Strato Fr. 112 W.

²⁷³ Strato Fr. 74 W.

²⁷⁴ Strato Fr. 48 W.

²⁷⁵ *Ipsi unitatem animae tuentur, quae, in totum corpus diffusa et ubique ipsa, velut flatus in calamo per cavernas, ita per sensualia variis modis emicet, non tam concisa quam dispensata.*

²⁷⁶ Tertullian *De an.* 14 speaks generically of *sensualia* (Sextus' αἰσθητήρια at M. 7.350). However, the reference is to the πόροι αἰσθητικοί which Sextus mentions at M. 7.129 and M. 7.364. Tertullian's comparison between these *sensualia* and the pipes of Archimedes' water organ confirms that we are dealing with hollow channels.

the size of the pipes: “Look at the marvelous gift of Archimedes, his hydraulic organ [...] The functioning of the organ is not too different from the functioning of the soul, as Strato and Aenesidemus and Heraclitus account for it”.²⁷⁷

If Strato and Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus refrain from dividing the soul into parts, and if they rather explain her different activities in terms of the physiology of the body, then Sextus is not mistaken in ascribing to them the idea that noetic functions are not distinct from sensory ones. However, the way in which Sextus puts it is inaccurate: he understands the expression *προκύπτειν διὰ τῶν αἰσθητηρίων* (Tertullian’s *emicare per sensuality*) as indicating that our mind departs from the body towards external objects (at least this is implied at *M.* 7.364), whereas Strato and Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus refer to the circulation of the psychic pneuma *inside* the body, when it travels from the ruling-part-of-the-soul to the peripheral sensors, and thus accomplishes sensation.²⁷⁸ There is no cause for surprise if *διάνοια* stands for the corresponding material agent: conflating the spheres of the mental and of the physical is a distinctive feature of Hellenistic corporealism, of which Strato’s physicalism is arguably the most extreme version.

Now that the pedigree and primary meaning of Aenesidemus’ ‘Heraclitean’ account of soul have been recovered, we are in the position to tackle the question of the alleged contradiction between *M.* 7.349 and *M.* 7.350, where Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus is apparently placing our intellect both outside and inside the body. The inconsistency between these two theses could have been taken as evidence to the effect that Aenesidemus’ ‘Heraclitean’ doctrines do not have a positive meaning of their own. However, this inconsistency is only in Sextus’ presentation of them, whereas of the two parallel testimonies in Tertullian, one (*DA* 14) refers to the soul; the other (*DA* 15) refers to the ruling-part-of-the-soul, and the two doctrines suggest no contradiction in this other presentation. On the contrary, the point is basically the same: psychic functions are merely mechanical processes which the psychic pneuma undergoes when excited by external stimuli, these being counted as a surrogate ruling-part-of-the-soul.

²⁷⁷ *Specta portentosissimam Archimedis munificentiam, organum hydraulicum dico [...] non longe hoc exemplum est a Stratone et Aenesidemo et Heraclito.*

²⁷⁸ See Wehrli (1950), p. 73 and Solmsen (1961), p. 183, according to whom the Sextus passage reporting Aenesidemus’ doctrine καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον ‘receives its point from the definition of the soul as πνεῦμα’.

However, upholders of the *reductio ad absurdum* hypothesis do not only appeal to the alleged contradiction between *M.* 7.350 and *M.* 7.349. They also claim that a dialectical interpretation makes best sense of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' account of the soul, which, they believe, amounts to Stoic epistemology transformed for the sake of argument. For, in their view, Aenesidemus' claim καθ' Ἡράκλειτον that thinking and sensing are one and the same thing is modelled upon the Stoic theory of the mind as a *tabula rasa* which derives all its knowledge from sense-perception.²⁷⁹ This interpretation is to be rejected. It is a doxographical *topos* that eminent early poets and philosophers, including Heraclitus, were committed to the idea that thinking is the same as sensing. This line of interpreting the Presocratics dates back as far as Plato and Aristotle, well before the Stoics came: τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ταὐτὸν εἶναι.²⁸⁰ The idea is not that the mind elaborates on sense-reports, as the Stoics maintain. It is, rather, that there is no qualitative difference between sensing and thinking, the mind being a receptacle of external stimuli.

One might have thought that this account of the mind was no longer on the philosophical agenda by the time of Aenesidemus. However, the name of Strato appears in both Sextus and Tertullian next to Aenesidemus, and we know that Strato did address the question of the soul: he accepted Aristotle's framing of the question, but sided with the Presocratics instead.²⁸¹ It is no accident that he was given the nickname 'Physicist'. In fact, the topic of whether thinking is the same as sensing is still a matter of discussion in the late Hellenistic era. Tertullian's *On the Soul* suggests that the naïve reductionism that Aristotle had attributed to the Presocratics found upholders among post-Hellenistic doctors. At least this is the case with Tertullian's medical source Soranus (early second century AD), who was an authoritative doxographer, and who claimed allegiance to Democritus against Aristotle.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Burkhard (1973), pp. 90-91.

²⁸⁰ The quotation comes from Arist. *DA* 427a 22. Aet. *Plac.* 4.5.12 names Empedocles, Democritus and Parmenides. Aristotle in the fourth book of the *Metaphysics* had attributed the idea to Homer and most Presocratics, including Heraclitus (see above p. 140). Plato's antecedent is, of course, the *Theaetetus*.

²⁸¹ Strato ascribes intellect to every living being (n. 44 above), and makes the point that thoughts are 'of the same nature' as sense-perceptions (n. 43 above). More on Strato's account of the soul and on echoes of it in medical literature in Polito (1992), p. 465 and *passim*.

²⁸² Tert. *De an.* 12.6: *ergo unum erunt utrumque* [intellect and the soul] *et Democritus obtinebit differentiam tollens*.

If this is the pedigree of the view that Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus, the upholders of the *reductio ad absurdum* hypothesis are right in observing that it is incompatible with Stoicism. However, it is not true that it is Stoic epistemology transformed. The Stoics do not offer reductionist claims of this kind, let alone are willing to attribute them to Heraclitus or any other Presocratic. The attribution to Heraclitus rests upon a well-established tradition of Peripatetic interpretation of the Presocratics, which is still authoritative in medical doxography.

One further observes that the idea that sensing is the same as thinking is not the core of Aenesidemus' account of the soul καθ' Ἡράκλειτον. It only appears in Sextus. Tertullian, for his part, arrives at the conclusion that the body makes the soul apt to sense different things. There is no reference to thinking. What is common between Sextus and Tertullian is that both account for sensation in terms of the mind's 'leaning out' through the sense-organs. It is of this account, centred on the working of the channels, that Sextus claims that Strato and Aenesidemus are the initiators.

As the Cicero report at *Tusc. Disp.* I 46 shows, the channels theory was also known outside medical circles, presumably among Academics in Alexandria. This identification is suggested by the Platonising addition which Cicero superimposes onto the basic account of sensation attributable to Strato, i.e. the addition that we achieve direct access to and accurate knowledge of things, only after death, when our soul is detached from the body.²⁸³ It is possible, but by no means necessary, that Aenesidemus learned the channels theory from the Academy: Strato is, after all, one of the most eminent philosophers ever to have appeared in Alexandria, and Aenesidemus may well have read him firsthand. Moreover, Cicero appropriates the channels

²⁸³ Gottshalk (1965), p. 163 identifies Cicero's source at *Tusc. Disp.* I.46 with Antiochus. Lucretius *DRN* 3.359 echoes and attacks parts of Strato's account of sensation, but he misunderstands the point in the light of the Platonic addition that Cicero draws above. Presumably Lucretius had no direct access to the original account, and borrowed the revised version from the same source as Cicero. The metaphor of the senses as 'windows' through which the mind sees things, often in the discussion of comparable expressions from the Bible, becomes popular in later times, but it loses any reference to 'channels' and nerves. It appears in Philo of Alexandria (*Gen.* 2 Fr. 34), Gregorius Nyss. (*Orat. Dom.* 5 p. 304); Maximus Conf. (*Schol. In Eccl.* 12 34-38); Procopius (*Cantic.* 1600 51-53) and other Christian authors. Presumably their access to Strato's account of sensation was, again, only indirect, and mediated by the same Academic/Platonic sources on which Lucretius also depends.

theory in order to make his Platonic point about the soul's captivity inside the body. This point certainly does not belong to Strato (in Strato's view, the soul dies simultaneously with the body), and is in sharp conflict with Sextus' account of Heraclitus' epistemology at *M.* 7.130, arguably derived from Aenesidemus, where our mind is alleged to partake in the truth only to the extent that the sensory channels are open and functional. For all these reasons, it is likely that Aenesidemus borrowed his material on sense-channels directly from Strato. The Stoics, for their part, do appeal to metaphors which, if interpreted literally, might suggest that the soul circulates through specific organs.²⁸⁴ However, these metaphors are nothing more than metaphors for the Stoics, and they never invoke 'channels' and/or nerves. Nor do they need to, because the soul for them is that special kind of *pneuma* which is totally fused with the body, and which requires no ducts by which to be carried.

To sum up, there existed in antiquity an account of sensation based on 'channels'. This account pre-existed the discovery of the nerves, but it is only after this discovery that it became authoritative, at least among physicians. It is formalised by Strato. Only rare and vague echoes remain in philosophical literature, and these fall short of explaining Aenesidemus' reference to it. The hypothesis that he had firsthand knowledge of Strato's account is both economical and historically plausible. Indeed, both Sextus and Tertullian mention Strato, and it would be perverse to reject the explicit indication of our sources.²⁸⁵ My contention is that Aenesidemus appropriated Strato's theory, and foisted it onto Heraclitus on account of its phenomenalist implications, which I shall now investigate.

²⁸⁴ Chrysippus (*SVF* 2.879) compares the action of the *hegemonikon* inside the body with that of a spider with its nets. The comparison is then resumed by Hisdosus (dated by Marcovich to twelfth century AD), who attributes it to Heraclitus (Heraclitus Fr. 115 Marcovich). Marcovich hypothesises a connection with Aenesidemus' own account of Heraclitus, which, on Marcovich's story, incorporates Stoic material. It remains a fact, however, that the comparison as such finds no parallel in Aenesidemus, and that the distinctive reference to channels is missing from both Hisdosus and Chrysippus. As to the Stoic account of the soul, as advanced by Chrysippus (*SVF* 2.885), it is hard to find there any concern whatsoever with identifying the actual anatomical processes underpinning his postulated functioning of the soul.

²⁸⁵ As does Burkhard (1973), p. 91 n. 1, who maintains that Aenesidemus' coupling with Strato is merely due to the doxographical arrangement of the report, and that Aenesidemus' doctrine should be understood, rather, in the light of Stoicism.

IV.3 *The 'Channels' of Sensation*

The report on Strato and Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον in Tertullian develops the idea that the structure of our sense-organs determines the way in which we sense things. This seems fair enough. However, on closer consideration, if one accepts this idea, further questions arise concerning the epistemological status of sensory data. I shall quote a few passages from modern literature which illustrate the terms of the question:

Charles Bell (1774-1842) pioneered experimental research into the cause of differences in sensory qualities. By poking himself smartly on the tongue with a sharp needle, he noticed that for some areas he could elicit a sensation of pain, but for others he could elicit no pain whatsoever, but only a slightly metallic taste. Despite the identity of the stimulus, the effect was markedly different, and this moved Bell to believe that the difference was due to the nerves or to the brain and not the nature of the stimulus. He also noticed that perceptions of light can be produced by pressing on the side of the eyeball. At the time the prevailing view held that the quality of the sensation was essentially determined by the nature of the stimulus.

On this basis later scientists arrived at the conclusion that "sensation is not a conduction of a quality or state of external bodies to consciousness, but a conduction of a quality or a state of our nerves to consciousness, excited by an external cause", and also that "the brain in some sense has to reconstruct the world from the effects on nerves, and hence that the nature of the world is not sheerly 'given' to us. It is in some measure a product of our brains".²⁸⁶

Thus, one crucial question raised by the functioning of the nervous system (it does not matter whether this is described in terms of pneuma or neurones) concerns whether or not sensory data correspond to an external state of affair. Aenesidemus himself is aware of the matter and, indeed, willing to exploit it in order to reinforce his Sceptical arguments (Diog. L. 9.81): "The third trope of suspension of judgement depends on the differences between our sensory channels [...] from which it follows that what we sense is no more of one description than of another". Hence it emerges that Aenesidemus appropriated the sensory channels theory not only for the sake of commenting on Heraclitus, but also in order to argue that sensation does not provide cognitive access to external objects, thus foreshadowing findings and conclusions of modern neurology.

²⁸⁶ All quotations are from Smith Churchland (1986), pp. 20-21.

Of course the reliability of sense reports has been challenged, in antiquity as well as in modern times, independently of any consideration concerning the physiology of sensation, except that the experimental discovery of the 'channels' of the sensory pneuma: 1) grants this challenge the status of an observational truth; 2) suggests that altering external data is not an occasional event due to some special states or circumstances such as illness, temporary distortion of perception, or distance from the object perceived, but is intrinsic in the very way in which we relate to the outside world.²⁸⁷

Not all ancient philosophers and physicians acquainted with sensory channels and nerves were aware of, or willing to draw, such consequences. In Aristotle the channels have no bearing on his account of sense-perception: the postulated existence of anatomical connections between the central organ and the peripheral sensors merely purports to explain how our mind becomes conscious of the affections our senses undergo. The point is perhaps trivial, but less so than it may seem, if one bears in mind that the Stoics refrain from any anatomical consideration and invoke the all-pervasive power of their pneuma instead. Galen for his part does acknowledge the fact that sensation is determined by the structure of our sense-organs (although, as I said, he refrains from appealing to pneuma circulating in the sensory nerves), but he accounts for the structure of our sense-organs in terms of a providential plan of nature which made them faithful witnesses of the external world (*Us. part.* 3.641). The assumption that our senses are commensurable with their objects is one to which the majority of dogmatic philosophers, from Aristotle down to the Stoics, are committed.

However, when we come to medical authors, they appear to be at least aware of the epistemological questions which the sensory channels theory poses. This is the case with Vindicianus, who expounds an account of sensation which Wellmann attributes to Diocles of Carystus, an eminent physician of the early Hellenistic period, and in which the *viae* play a crucial role:

²⁸⁷ The idea that for the Sceptics there is no deception has been argued by Striker (1996), p. 140: "While the Academic appeals to familiar cases of sensory illusion to argue that one can never entirely rule out the possibility of such circumstances, the Pyrrhonist disputes the right to speak of deception at all". Admittedly there are passages in which the deception terminology is also used by the Sceptics (e.g. Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.345, quoted above ch. III.3, and Diog. L. 9.85 referred to by Striker), presumably for the sake of the argument or as an allowance to the habitual way of talking.

[Diocles?] maintains that there is one and the same sensory power inside us, which is transmitted from the heart to the soul, and that it differentiates on account of differences in the channels. Accordingly, he maintains, this power becomes sight when carried by the sight channels, it becomes hearing when carried by the hearing channels, it becomes smell when carried by the olfactory channels, it becomes taste in the tongue, it becomes touch in the body as a whole.²⁸⁸

Thus, on this view, the soul has only one and the same sensory power (*virtus sensifica*), which differentiates into the five senses on account of the different structure of the sensory channels (*pro diversitate viarum*). The Stoics instead posit five kinds of pneuma. The difference is substantial: the Stoics posit five pneumas because for them things have no more and no less than five classes of properties; sense-reports in Vindicianus are inaccurate, because of certain processes of alteration which the pneuma undergoes when carried by the channels.²⁸⁹ Thus, psychic monism and channels theory provide the framework for a virtually Sceptic epistemology. Vindicianus does not make the point that sense-reports are merely states of the pneuma, but the idea is there. Asclepiades *ap. Calc.* ch. 216 formalises it:

This common sense [which provides the principle of sensation] is touch, but it differentiates on account of the parts of the body with which we sense. For the nature of sensation is determined by the sense-organ involved: it is sight through the eyes, it is hearing through the ears, and likewise for all the other senses. Yet, one and the same is the soul's breath, which transforms itself in many fashions.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Vind. c. 18; p. 219 FSÄ: [Diocles?] *ait unam esse ex corde atque eandem virtutem sensificantem, quae ad animam transmittatur, sed pro viarum diversitate fieri differentem. cum enim, inquit, in vis visalibus fuerit constituta visus perficitur, cum in audibilibus auditus, cum in odorantibus odor, cum in linguae partibus sapor, cum in toto corpore tactus.* The recent editor of Diocles, Van der Eijk, does not include the text in his collection. The identity of the author whose views Vindicianus expounds is unrecoverable with certainty.

²⁸⁹ Vindicianus claims that sight alone is reliable, because the optic channel is clean and the pneuma circulating in it remains uncontaminated. He also argues that if the channels of other senses had been as clean as the optic one, we would perhaps see through all our sense-organs alike (Vind. ch. 18ff. pp. 219-220 FSÄ), all other qualities being, in a way, visible qualities transformed. The idea is so bizarre that one may not want to attribute it to Diocles or any other eminent author, but only to Vindicianus, who may have misunderstood the point. Be that as it may, the fact that the author of the account of sensation in Vindicianus grants trustworthiness at least to sight suggests that in his view sensation is determined by our sense apparatus, but it is not merely a function of it. A similar case is probably that of Strato, who was concerned with demonstrating the unity of the soul, and not with the epistemological implications of the functioning of our sense apparatus. Since Strato considered qualities to be the principle of things (Frs. 42-43 W.), it is unlikely that he was willing to deny that we have cognitive access to them.

²⁹⁰ *Isque communis sensus est tactus, sed fit proprius ob diversitatem membrorum quibus*

Calcidius speaks of “parts of the body with which we sense” (*membra quibus sentimus*), probably translating αἰσθητήρια. However, the reference is to the ‘channels of the nerves’ (*meatus nervorum*), which Calcidius mentions just one line before our quotation, and which allegedly carry the “principle of sensation” (*initium sentiendi*) through the body. This principle of sensation is material, indeed pneumatic (*spiritus*), and transmission of any sense report inside the body occurs via a kind of touch (*communis sensus est tactus*). The soul is one and the same everywhere, but the processes it undergoes make it sense different qualities (*unus est spiritus, qui in multis deformatur*). So far the idea is the same that we have found in Vindicianus. However, here “the nature of sensation is determined by the sense-organ involved” (*qualia fuerint organa sentiendi, talis sensus existit*). This last sentence establishes a causal relationship between the nature of the nerves and the content of sensation, thus ruling out direct access to external stimuli.

True, Asclepiades, according to other sources, regarded sense-perceptions alone as “really and truly acts of apprehension (ἀντίληψις),”²⁹¹ and thinking as being sensation expanded.²⁹² Thus, it may seem odd that Asclepiades should urge sceptical conclusions from the functioning of nerves. However, his polemic against the Empiricists led him precisely to deny that sensory experience alone provides a standard of truth.²⁹³ The alleged functioning of the nerves may have provided him with a powerful argument to that effect.²⁹⁴ To be sure, it does provide Aenesidemus with it:

The third trope depends on the differences between the sensory channels. For an apple gives the impression of being pale yellow in

sentimus. Qualia enim fuerint organa sentiendi, talis sensus existit, ut per oculos visus, auditus per aures, atque in eundem modum ceteri; unus tamen est spiritus, qui in multis deformatur.

²⁹¹ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.202.

²⁹² Cael. Aur. *MA* 1.115; Calc. 216.

²⁹³ Asclepiades’ attack on experience appears to have covered all elements involved (memory and sensation). As far as sensation is concerned see Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.91; *M.* 8.7. Asclepiades is brought in as the champion of the Empiricists’ opponents at Gal. *On Medical Experience* p. 87 W, and it is from Asclepiades that Galen derives the anti-Empiricist argument that he expounds at pp. 88-97 W.

²⁹⁴ This line of interpreting Asclepiades’ attitude to the senses only apparently conflicts with the texts which emphasise his empiricism. For the term ἀντίληψις need not connote cognitive access to an external state of affairs, as I have shown when discussing Sext. Emp. *PH* 2.51 (see above ch. III.6), and therefore Asclepiades’ making the senses ‘apprehensive’ does not commit him to the idea that the content as such of sensation is true. One must bear in mind, in this respect, that sense qualities are for Asclepiades merely a by-product of the motion of certain corpuscles, which for their part are *sine ulla qualitate solita* (Cael. Aur. *MA* 1.105).

colour to the sight, sweet in taste and fragrant in smell. An object of the same shape is made to appear different by differences in the mirrors reflecting it. Thus it follows that what we perceive is no more of one description than of another.²⁹⁵

Here again we find the expression *πόροι αἰσθητικοί* that we find in Aenesidemus' Heraclitean material. However, the difference of shape between our sensory channels is not brought in to explain how one and the same soul performs different functions, as it does in his interpretation of Heraclitus. It is not the nature and the functioning of the soul that are under discussion in the third trope. Aenesidemus' concern here is the epistemological implications which can be drawn from it.

By contrast with other tropes, Aenesidemus' argument here does not involve disagreement. For the yellowness, the sweetness and all the other qualities of an apple are only different from one another, but there is no conflict between them. Why should their difference bring about suspension of judgement then? The point appears to be the following. One and the same apple is perceived differently by each of the five senses, in the same way as one and the same object looks different when reflected in mirrors of different shape. Accordingly, it may well be the case that the apple too is *μονόποτος*, that is, is endowed with only one quality, in its own nature, and that it originates all the qualities that we sense on account of the fivefold constitution of our sensory apparatus. If so, any inference from the affections of our senses to the inner nature of objects is ruled out.²⁹⁶

While it may be true that a basic understanding of the argument of the third trope does not require acquaintance with the sensory channels or any other scientific theory,²⁹⁷ it remains a fact that

²⁹⁵ Diog. L. 9.81: Τρίτος ὁ τρόπος παρὰ τὰς τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων διαφορὰς. τὸ γοῦν μήλον ὁράσει μὲν ὥχρον, γεύσει δὲ γλυκύ, ὁσφρήσει δ'εὐώδες ὑποπίπτει. καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ δὲ μορφή παρὰ τὰς διαφορὰς τῶν κατόπτρων ἀλλοῖα θεωρεῖται. ἀκολουθεῖ οὖν μὴ μάλλον εἶναι τοῖον τὸ φαινόμενον ἢ ἀλλοῖον.

²⁹⁶ Sextus' version of the trope also takes into consideration the diametrically opposed hypothesis, that the external object may have an unspecified number of extra-properties that we are not equipped to sense (*PH* 1.96-98). On this story, it is not so much a matter that the qualities that we sense do not inhere in the external object, but rather that they may be incomplete. If so, this argument has nothing to do with the difference between our sense-organs, but rather with their limited number. Since not only Diogenes but also Sextus presents the third trope as depending upon the difference between our sense-organs (*PH* 1.91), one may suspect that the argument based on the possible existence of some extra properties unknown to us is an addition.

²⁹⁷ Annas and Barnes (1985), p. 68: "the term 'channels' should not mislead us

Aenesidemus does refer to channels, thus appropriating the account of sensation which is centred on them. The idea is that there are certain hollow channels in the body which are identifiable with the sensory nerves; that there is a substance, *pneuma*, which circulates in them and thus accomplishes sensation; and, finally, that the quality of sensation is determined by the structure of the channels in which the *pneuma* circulates. Perhaps not all these ideas agree with what one might expect a Sceptic to be committed to. On the other hand, if Aenesidemus had not had the intention of resuming and appropriating this account, the reference to the different structure of our channels in the trope would have been redundant if not misleading. One must bear in mind that the term *πόροι* as such entails that these channels carry some matter.

Evidence that Aenesidemus' argument in the trope has the same origin and reference point as his 'Heraclitean' account of sensation lies not only in the expression *πόροι αἰσθητικοί*, but also in the analogies which Sextus *PH* 1.95 adopts in order to describe the case of his postulated *μονόποιος* apple:

That the apple has but one quality might be argued from what we said above regarding the food absorbed by bodies, and the water sucked up by trees, and the breath in flutes and pipes and similar instruments; for the apple likewise may be all of one sort but appear different owing to differences in the sense-organs in which perception takes place.²⁹⁸

Sextus here refers to a previous passage in which these analogies are also given. This is in the first trope at *PH* 1.53-54:

For just as the same food when digested becomes in one place a vein, in another an artery, in another a bone, in another a sinew, or some other piece of the body, displaying a different potency according to the difference in the parts which receive it; — and just as the same unblended water, when it is absorbed by trees, becomes in one place bark, in another branch, in another blossom, and so finally fig and quince and each of the other fruits; — and just as the single identical breath of a musician breathed into a flute becomes here a shrill note and there a deep note, and the same pressure of his hand on the lyre

into thinking that the mode presupposes some particular scientific theory of perception".

²⁹⁸ Μονόποιον μὲν γὰρ εἶναι τοῦτο ἐνδέχεται λογίζεσθαι ἐκ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῖν εἰρημένων περὶ τῆς εἰς τὰ σώματα ἀναδιδομένης τροφῆς καὶ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ εἰς τὰ δένδρα ἀναδιδομένου καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἐν αὐλοῖς καὶ σύριγξι καὶ τοῖς παραπλησίοις ὀργάνοις ἔμπνεομένου· δύναται γὰρ καὶ τὸ μήλον μονοειδὲς μὲν εἶναι, διάφορον δὲ θεωρεῖσθαι παρὰ τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων περὶ ᾧ γίνεται αὐτοῦ ἡ ἀντίληψις.

produces here a deep note and there a shrill note; — so likewise it is probable that the external objects appear different owing to differences in the structure of the animals which experience the sense-impression.²⁹⁹

Almost all elements of this series of analogies also occur in Aenesidemus' 'Heracleitean' account of sensation or in its cognates:

Analogy	Aenesidemus' trope	Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον	Diocles at Vindicianus 18
food	PH 1.53: ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ αὐτὴ τροφή ἀναδιδομένη ὅπου μὲν γίνεται φλέψ ὅπου δὲ ἀρτηρία ὅπου δὲ ὀστέον ὅπου δὲ νεῦρον...		<i>sicut enim una atque eadem cibi materia pro differentia viarum nutrimenta ministrans nunc in nervos vel arterias, nunc venas aut ossa, vel musculos transit</i>
breath in the flute	PH 1.54: καθάπερ τὸ τοῦ μουσουργοῦ πνεῦμα ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐμπνεόμενον τῷ αὐλῷ ὅπου μὲν γίνεται ὀξὺ ὅπου δὲ βαρὺ...	Tert. DA 14: <i>velut flatus in calamo per cavernas...</i> Sext. Emp. M. 7.350: καθάπερ διὰ τινων ὁπῶν...	
breath in the organ	PH 1.95: καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἐν αὐλοῖς καὶ σύριγξι καὶ τοῖς παραπλησίοις ὀργάνοις ἐμπνεόμενου...	Tert. DA 14: <i>non longe hoc exemplum [organum hydraulicum Archimedis] est a Stratone et Aenesidemo et Heraclito...</i>	
thesis	PH 1.95: δύναται καὶ τὸ μῆλον μονοειδὲς μὲν εἶναι, διάφορον δὲ θεωρεῖσθαι παρὰ τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων περὶ ᾧ γίνεται αὐτοῦ ἡ ἀντίληψις (cf. Diog. L. 9.81: παρὰ τὰς τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων διαφοράς).	Tert. DA 14: <i>ita per sensuality [cf. Sext. Emp. M. 7.129; 363: διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων] variis modis anima emicet.</i>	<i>ita immutatur sensifica virtus animae secundum accipientium viarum differentiam</i>

²⁹⁹ Ὡς περ γὰρ ἡ αὐτὴ τροφή ἀναδιδομένη ὅπου μὲν γίνεται φλέψ ὅπου δὲ ἀρτηρία ὅπου δὲ ὀστέον ὅπου δὲ νεῦρον καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον, παρὰ τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν ὑποδεχομένων αὐτὴν μερῶν διάφορον ἐπιδεικνυμένη δύναμις, καὶ ὥς περ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐν καὶ μονοειδὲς ἀναδιδομένον εἰς τὰ δένδρα ὅπου μὲν γίνεται φλοιὸς ὅπου δὲ κλάδος ὅπου δὲ καρπὸς καὶ ἤδη σύκον καὶ ροιὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον, καὶ καθάπερ τὸ τοῦ μουσουργοῦ πνεῦμα ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐμπνεόμενον τῷ αὐλῷ ὅπου μὲν γίνεται ὀξὺ ὅπου δὲ βαρὺ, καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἐπέρειςις τῆς χειρὸς ἐπὶ τῆς λύρας ὅπου μὲν βαρὺν φθόγγον ποιεῖ ὅπου δὲ ὀξὺν, οὕτως εἰκὸς καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς ὑποκείμενα διάφορα θεωρεῖσθαι παρὰ τὴν διάφορον κατασκευὴν τῶν τὰς φαντασίας ὑπομενόντων ζώων.

Thus it emerges that these analogies provided the standard way to illustrate the functioning of the channels, referring to a material differentiation of the sensory stimulus which takes place in the nerves.³⁰⁰ There is admittedly a gap between the uses that Aenesidemus makes of these analogies in the tropes and in his 'Heraclitean' account of sensation: in the third trope it is the external stimulus that is the object of comparison, whereas in his account of Heraclitus it is our soul instead. In the former case Aenesidemus considers the hypothesis that the sensory channels make one and the same stimulus fivefold. In the latter case he has Heraclitus maintain that our *pneuma* is one and the same, and yet that it becomes fivefold on account of the different channels. The formulations are different, but the point is the same, i.e. that the quality of sensation is determined by the processes that sense reports, in the form of *pneuma* transmitting them, undergo inside our body.

It is remarkable that Aenesidemus, even in genuinely Sceptical material, adopts an account of sensation in terms of anatomical channels, which is by no means a common one, at least in philosophical literature. This turns out to be still more remarkable in view of the fact that the argument in the trope would work just as well even without the reference to the channels, as Sextus' account of the third trope (*PH* 1.91) shows, where Sextus talks of 'the senses' (αἰσθητήρια) without any further qualification.

A possible explanation is that Aenesidemus was influenced by the medical environment of Ptolemaic Alexandria. Perhaps he regarded this account of sensation as the most up-to-date way of accounting for the functioning of the senses on the basis of experimental evidence. Its status as an experimental truth, rather than a theoretical belief, may have enhanced it in his eyes. On the other hand, an account of the functioning of our organism in terms of channels is not just one ordinary scientific theory among others, but has some special

³⁰⁰ True, there is no evidence in the surviving versions of the first trope (where these analogies are fully given in Sextus) that channels were under discussion there as well. On the other hand there is no reason why Aenesidemus should appeal to the functioning of the channels only in the third and fourth trope, and not also in the other tropes devoted to the agent of knowledge (first and second trope). An alternative explanation would be that Sextus was so fond of these analogies that he pasted them from the third to the first trope regardless of their relevance. I note that the analogy with mirrors of different shape, mentioned by Diogenes as exemplifying the functioning of the channels in the third trope, appears in Sextus' first trope (*PH* 1.48-49).

connotations. This is the way in which Galen *De naturalibus facultatibus* 2.80 puts the matter:

Thus, every hypothesis of channels (ἅπαντα πόρων ὑπόθεσις) as an explanation of natural functioning is perfect nonsense. For, if there were not an inborn power given by Nature to each one of the organs at the very beginning, then animals could not continue to live even for a few days. For let us suppose that [...] they were steered only by material forces, and not by any special powers [...]. If we suppose this, I am sure it would be ridiculous for us to speak of natural, and, still more, psychical powers, and, in fact, life as a whole [...]. But given that we do have these powers, we no longer need to appeal to the size of channels, little or big, resting on an unproved hypothesis, and to some favourable disposition of the organs, for explaining the secretion of urine and bile.

Galen's direct target is Erasistratus' account of the secretion of urine and bile, but his criticism applies to any account of biological activities based on anatomical 'channels' (ἅπαντα πόρων ὑπόθεσις εἰς φυσικὴν ἐνέργειαν). Galen, of course, does not intend to question the existence of 'channels' inside the body. The point is that the powers of the soul are, in his view, prior to, and indeed the cause of the functioning of, our body.

Ptolemy confirms the existence of two conflicting accounts of sensation, one of which is centred on the powers of the soul, and the other one on the physical processes that pneuma undergoes inside the body. This latter account is illustrated with reference to the functioning of the flute, a comparison which is by now familiar to us (*De criterio et parte principali* 8):

If the soul consists not of one and the same, but of different kinds of material, it will be the powers of these materials that shape the parts of the body which contain them, in such a way as to make the parts of the body a suitable instrument of the soul [...]. If, by contrast, the nature of the soul is one and the same, the variety of its functions will be determined by differences in the parts of the body through which it passes [τὰ σώματα περιέχοντα τὴν ψυχὴν], just as the variety of sounds produced by one and the same breath is due to the inequality or regularity of the parts of the organ.³⁰¹

³⁰¹ καὶ εἰ μὲν οὐκ ἀπὸ μιᾶς καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ὕλης ἀλλ' ἀπὸ διαφόρων συνέστηκεν, ὑπὸ τῆς τούτων ιδιότητος τὰ περιέχοντα ἐκάστην σώματα πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον τῆς οὐσίας διαμορφούμενα [...], εἰ δὲ μία καὶ ἡ αὐτῆς πάσης ἐστὶν ὑπόστασις, τὸ ποικίλον τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτῆς ὑπὸ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν περιεχόντων σωμάτων ἀποτελεῖται καθάπερ τὸ ποικίλον τῶν ἀφ' ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πνεύματος γινομένων ἤκων ὑπὸ τῆς ἀνισότητος ἢ ὁμοιότητος τῶν περιεχόντων ὀργάνων. Ptolemy for his part takes side with the former account at ch. 15 (= p. 20.7-12).

Both explanations would equally suit Aenesidemus' line of argument in the trope, since the claim that the inner property of things may be originally undifferentiated could be made regardless of whether five different sensory powers are connate, or whether they come about on account of the difference between channels. Why then did Aenesidemus take sides with the latter account, and not just follow the Sceptical principle of equipollence?

In the case of his interpretation of Heraclitus he might have been compelled to do so, if he thought psychic monism was Heraclitus' original doctrine, since refraining from appealing to different powers of the soul is consistent with monism. However, a reference to the channels is also found in the tropes, and this is evidence for Aenesidemus' personal fondness for reducing mind to a function of the working of the senses — Asclepiades speaks of a 'co-exercise' of them.³⁰² The idea that our mind is only an epiphenomenon of the senses is frequent in modern philosophy, but is curiously rare in antiquity, perhaps because the ethical purposes that most ancient schools ascribe to philosophy forced them to postulate that our mind be capable of resisting external stimuli and of making rational choices. Both Aenesidemus and his Heraclitus appear to oppose this assumption. Hence the question arises, what nature Aenesidemus' Heraclitus attributes to our soul.

IV.4 *The Substance of the Soul (Tert. DA 9)*

In the course of our previous discussion it has emerged that pneuma is the substance normally thought to circulate in the channels. The text which explicitly states that, in Aenesidemus' view, the substance of the soul is pneumatic is at Tert. DA 9: "Air is not the very substance of the soul, although so it was posited by Aenesidemus and Anaximenes and, I believe, according to some commentators, Heraclitus".³⁰³ Before investigating the philosophical issues related to this idea, I shall briefly discuss some basic questions concerning the report.

While the sequence Anaximenes-Heraclitus accords with their chronology, listing Aenesidemus in the first position clearly does not

³⁰² Thus Aetius 4.2.12: Ἀσκληπιάδης ὁ ἰατρός συγγυμνασίαν τῶν αἰσθήσεων [τὴν ψυχὴν εἶναι φησι], echoed by Macr. 1.14.19; [Gal.] *Def. Med.* 10.373; *ibid.* 379 et alii.

³⁰³ ... *non ut aër sit ipsa substantia eius [animae], etsi hoc Aenesidemo visum est et Anaximeni puto secundum quosdam et Heraclito.*

follow the same principle. Perhaps it is a signal that Aenesidemus is the source for the report that Heraclitus and others thought air to be the substance of the soul. However, Tertullian does not present Aenesidemus as a source, but as one of the upholders of that view (*Aenesidemo visum est... et Heraclito*), and while Tertullian knows that the attribution of this idea to Heraclitus is only an interpretation (*visum est... puto secundum quosdam et Heraclito*)³⁰⁴, he does not identify the *quidam* who advanced this interpretation with Aenesidemus. Perhaps these people are earlier interpreters of Heraclitus, to whose authority Aenesidemus appealed. This hypothesis squares well with the fact that Aenesidemus' exegesis of Heraclitus took the form of glosses on a pre-existing Stoic account of the Presocratic.³⁰⁵

However, it would be unfair to speculate on Tertullian's phrasing: he might be rendering Soranus' original report loosely, or Soranus himself might have already been doing so in relation to his source. For the problem of qualifying what commitment Aenesidemus had to the doctrines of his Heraclitus concerns those authors, such as Sextus, for whom Aenesidemus represents a Sceptical authority in the first place. Since, by contrast, Tertullian is not acquainted with Aenesidemus' Sceptic output, he is not bothered by the question of specifying what precise part Aenesidemus plays in the story, whether he was merely interpreting Heraclitus or whether he also endorsed his Heraclitus' views.

The idea that our soul is air belongs to the large family of pneumatic theories of the soul. Regardless of the various distinctions between different schools, *pneuma* at a certain point in the history of ancient philosophy became the substance with which the soul (or, in certain formulations, its material vehicle) was identified, to the point that later Platonists retrojected the idea onto Plato. Even the Epicureans appropriated it, and tried to provide an atomistic account of the soul in terms of atoms of air, fire, wind and a certain 'unnamed element', thus matching the dominant way of describing the psychic *pneuma* as a special airy, warm, self-moving substance. There are admittedly a few exceptions of Hellenistic philosophers who refrained from adopting a pneumatic theory of the soul. However,

³⁰⁴ It is most likely that *puto secundum quosdam* refers to Heraclitus, rather than to Anaximenes, since the latter is regularly counted among those who thought the soul to be air (Aet. *Plac.* 4.3.2)

³⁰⁵ See ch. V.3.

these people did so because they did not want to take sides on the question of the soul, and not because they were committed to a different theory.³⁰⁶

While Aenesidemus' appeal to *pneuma* is, thus, by no means surprising if he was to address the question of the soul, it is important not to conflate his position with other pneumatic theories available at the time. Tertullian's coupling of Aenesidemus and Heraclitus with Anaximenes, rather than with the Stoics, suggests that the reference is to *plain* air. This conclusion gains further support from the fact that Sextus in his account of Heraclitus at *M.* 7.129-131, which is derived from, or at any rate cognate to Aenesidemus',³⁰⁷ ascribes to respiration the purpose of making us *voεποί*, i.e. of supplying us with the substance of the mind (*voύς*). Identifying the substance of the mind/soul specifically with breathed air was by no means common in antiquity. Aristotle and the Stoics, for instance, are careful in pointing out that the soul is *connate* *pneuma*.

If one is to recover the historical terms of the debate to which Aenesidemus intended to contribute, Galen's treatise *De usu respirationis* (in particular 4.472-473; 501-502; 505), in parallel with certain passages in the *De tremore* and in the *De usu partium*, provides interesting material and points of reference. Certain authors maintain that the purpose of respiration is merely to refrigerate the inner heat (Aristotle, Diocles, the Stoics and Galen himself), on the assumption that the substance of the soul is essentially different from outer air. Others believe that breathing supplies the substance of the soul (Praxagoras, Erasistratus, Asclepiades and 'thousands' of physicians), on the assumption that breathed air *is* the the soul. Thus, the 'scientific' matter under disagreement concerns the purpose of respiration. The underlying philosophical issue, Galen urges, concerns whether the psychic substance is *connate* with us (*σύμφυτον*) or taken from outside (*ἐπίκτητον*), and, at bottom, whether or not the soul is inert matter.

While 'thousands' of physicians maintained that the substance of the soul is derived from outside, only one, Asclepiades of Bithynia, developed the idea and provided a systematic account of the soul on

³⁰⁶ This is the case of the Academics (but Cicero does seem to accept a pneumatic theory of the soul), the Cyrenaics, the Empiricist physicians and the Sceptics (including Aenesidemus in contexts in which he is engaged in setting forth the Sceptical doctrine).

³⁰⁷ See above ch. II.3, and below ch. V.1-4.

that basis.³⁰⁸ It is a closer consideration of his theory that, once again, may give us a clue as to why Aenesidemus was so fond of it, and chose to attribute it to Heraclitus. First of all, Asclepiades attributes to breathing the function of ‘generating’ the soul, rather than simply ‘nourishing’ it, as the earlier upholders of the breathed-soul theory did. This was probably meant to stress that the soul is nothing more than breathed air — something which the notion of ‘nourishing’ the soul does not necessarily entail. Accordingly, Asclepiades claims that our soul comes and goes along with the breath that we draw in and out (Gal. *De usu resp.* 4.484):

In Asclepiades’ view there is no counting how many souls one has: for even the one existing a moment ago is now totally gone, and that which exists now is another, and a moment later will go too and another will come into being.³⁰⁹

A similar point is attributed to Asclepiades by Calcidius, *In Plat. Tim.* ch. 216 p. 231 W:

³⁰⁸ Gal. *De trem.* 7.614: ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ εἶπον τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν θερμοῦ πάθος εἶναι τὸ ρίγος, ἵνα μή τις τοῦ ἐξωθεν νομίσας εἰρῆσθαι, καταψεύδεσθαι με δόξειεν Ἑρασιστράτου καὶ Πραξαγόρου καὶ Φιλοτίμου καὶ Ἀσκληπιάδου καὶ μυρίων ἄλλων, ὅσοι τὸ θερμὸν οὐκ ἔμφυτον, ἀλλ’ ἐπίκτητον εἶναι νομίζουσι. πῶς γὰρ οὖν οὗτοι πάθος ἐμφύτου θερμοῦ λέγουσιν, οἱ μὴδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔμφυτον εἰδότες θερμόν; ἀλλ’ ἔμφυτον μὲν, ὥσπερ εἵπομεν, οὐ πάντες ὁμολογοῦσι τὸ θερμὸν ὑπάρχειν, γένεσιν δὲ ἐπίκτητον αὐτῷ τεχνώμενοι, διαφερόντως ἄλλος ἄλλην, ἐν τούτῳ πάντες ὁμολογοῦσιν, ὥς ἔσται τι κατὰ φύσιν ἐν ἐκάστῳ ζῶν θερμὸν, ἐν τῷ προσήκοντι μέτρῳ θεωρούμενον. καὶ δὴ περὶ τοῦτο ρίγος τε καὶ φρίκην φασὶν ἅπασάν τε γίνεσθαι κατὰ ψυξίν, Ἀσκληπιάδης γοῦν οὐ μόνον τὸ θερμὸν, ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ἄλλην τινὰ τιθεὶς ἔμφυτον δύναμιν κτλ. Galen speaks of inner heat, and not of pneuma, but the correspondence between the names of his opponents here and those of the upholders of the breathed-soul theory in the *De usu resp.* suggests that the reference is to the same issue, the notion of inner heat overlapping with that of vital pneuma. Galen at *De nat. fac.* 2.27-29 confirms that it is only, or primarily, Asclepiades who developed a consistent system based on the denial of connate agents: καὶ αὐταὶ δύο γεγόνασιν αἰρέσεις κατὰ γένος ἐν ἱατρικῇ τε καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ τῶν ἀποφνημαμένων τι περὶ φύσεως ἀνδρῶν, ὅσοι γ’ αὐτῶν γινώσκουσιν, ὃ τι λέγουσι, καὶ τὴν ἀκολουθίαν ὧν ὑπέθεντο θεωροῦσι θ’ ἅμα καὶ διαφυλάττουσιν. ὅσοι δὲ μὴδ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο συνιάσιν, ἀλλ’ ἄπλως, ὃ τι ἂν ἐπὶ γλῶτταν ἔλθῃ, ληροῦσιν, ἐν οὐδετέρᾳ τῶν αἰρέσεων ἀκριβῶς καταμένοντες, οὐδὲ μεμνήσθαι τῶν τοιούτων προσήκει [...] κατὰ μὲν τὴν δευτέραν αἵρεσιν οὕτε φύσεως οὕτε ψυχῆς ἰδίαν τινὰ νομίζουσιν οὐσίαν ἢ δύναμιν ὑπάρχειν, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῇ ποιᾷ συνόδῳ τῶν πρώτων ἐκείνων σωμάτων τῶν ἀπαθῶν ἀποτελεῖσθαι [...] ἔνιοι δ’ αὐτῶν καὶ ῥητῶς ἀπεφάναντο μηδεμίαν εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς δύναμιν, ἢ λογιζόμεθα, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἄγεσθαι παθῶν ἡμᾶς καθάπερ βοσκήματα πρὸς μὴδὲν ἀνανεῦσαι μὴδ’ ἀντειπεῖν δυναμένους [...] ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡμεῖς μὲν ἰδίᾳ δι’ ἐτέρων γραμμάτων ἐπὶ πλεόν ἔσκεψάμεθα περὶ τῶν Ἀσκληπιάδου τοῦ ἱατροῦ σκοπούμενοι δογμάτων.

³⁰⁹ Κατὰ δὲ τὸν Ἀσκληπιάδην οὐδὲ ἀριθμῆσαι δυνατόν ὅσας ἔχει· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὀλίγον πρόσθεν οὐσα νῦν οἴχεται τελέως, ἄλλη δὲ ἔστιν ἡ νῦν οὐσα, μικρὸν δ’ ὕστερον οἰχίσεται μὲν αὕτη, γενήσεται δ’ ἑτέρα.

Thus, according to these people [those who deny the ruling part of the soul any definite and distinguishable location inside the body], it happens that our soul is never one and the same, but always different and subject to changes. For since they maintain that the body precedes the soul, they also give primacy to the body. To be sure, the body is always in flux and subject to changes, and the soul, which is second in condition, is due to undergo the same affections as the body. Therefore, our soul too will change because of time, and will be affected by consumption and all the other affections which the body undergoes.³¹⁰

Calcidius relates Asclepiades' claim that our soul is always different to the idea that it undergoes all the changes which affect the body. Establishing this link is *prima facie* incorrect: the context at Galen *De usu resp.* 4.484 makes it clear that Asclepiades argued for the flux of the soul specifically by appealing to our breathing it in and out. However, it is possible to reconcile the two reports by considering Asclepiades' overall line of thought. In Asclepiades' view, the psychic pneuma is passive air breathed in and out. If it is passive air, with no connate powers, the question arises of what makes it accomplish psychic functions. Asclepiades' solution is that the soul (consciousness) is merely an epiphenomenon of the physiological processes which the pneuma undergoes in the body, in the first place the working of the senses, but presumably also the working of the respiratory and cardio-vascular apparatus, which in his view is the responsible for transforming outer air into psychic pneuma. Hence the conclusion comes about that our thoughts and states of mind vary depending on the conditions of the body, and have no stability in themselves. If this is correct, the flux motif, even in Calcidius, rests upon making the soul breathed air.

However paradoxical Asclepiades' flux theory may seem, it does nothing more than draw the necessary consequence from the idea that breathing supplies the substance of the soul, which relies on the most advanced discoveries in medical research of the time, in particular the discovery of inner organs and channels. Here is Calcidius' report on how, in Asclepiades' view, the air we breathe becomes psychic pneuma (*In Plat. Tim.* ch. 215 p. 229 W):

³¹⁰ *Contingit ergo secundum hanc eorum [qui nullum locum certum definitumque principali animae parti dederunt] opinionem, ut numquam sit eadem anima, sed diversa habeatur atque mutabilis. Cum enim dicant corpus esse antiquius anima, dant corpori principatum. Id porro semper fluit atque immutatur; et anima igitur, quae secundae conditionis est, eadem patietur quae corpus; mutabitur ergo tempore et senio, ceteris item, quae fert natura corporis, attemptabitur.*

The breath, as these people maintain, undergoes a process of rarefaction during respiration, when it moves from the mouth to the lungs, and from here it passes through the heart. Subsequently, it enters the so-called carotid vessels (those which cause a lethal sleep when wounded) carried by the arteries which depart from the hearth. Through these vessels it reaches the head. It is only at this point, as they maintain, that the principle of sensation comes-to-be, and from the head it spreads through the entire body through the subtle and narrow orifices of the nerves.³¹¹

The key point here is the reference to the thinning of breathed air on its way to the brain (*spiritus... attenuatus*). The idea is that air undergoes certain mechanical processes of selection between fine- and coarse-grained parts by passing through ducts of different sizes. As a result, only the thinnest parts of breathed air, those which are more apt to accomplish psychic functions, reach the head and hence become psychic pneuma. In its broad outline, this account corresponds to that of Erasistratus.³¹² He too hypothesised a selection of fine- and coarse-grained parts of breathed air.³¹³ The positioning of the organs and the size of the channels are held to effect this selection.³¹⁴

³¹¹ *Spiritus quippe, ut ipsi asseverant [qui nullum locum certum definitumque principali animae parti dederunt], per fauces ad pulmonem commeans in respiratione attenuatus ad cordis sedem facit transitum, deinde per arterias quae sunt a corde porrectae pervenit ad caroticas ita appellatas venas, quod eadem vulneratae mortem afferant soporiferam; per quas idem spiritus ad caput fertur [per tenues nervorum et angustos meatus], atque ibi primum nasci dicunt initium sentiendi et <per tenues nervorum et angustos meatus> intermanare ad ceterum corpus.* Transposing *per tenues nervorum et angustos meatus* into the last line is necessary if one is to make some sense of the account in the light of Hellenistic anatomical knowledge, let alone the fact that *per tenues nervorum et angustos meatus* is redundant in its transmitted position.

³¹² Gal. *An in arteriis natura sanguis contineatur*, 4.706: λεπτομερέστερον μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἂν εἶη τὸ κατὰ τὰς ἀρτηρίας πνεῦμα τοῦ περιέχοντος ἡμᾶς ἀέρος, ὥς ἡ γένεσις αὐτοῦ διδάσκει. γίγνεται γὰρ κατὰ τὸν Ἐρασίστρατον ἐκ τοῦ περιέχοντος ἡμᾶς ἀέρος εἶσω τοῦ σώματος εἰς μὲν τὰς κατὰ πνεύμονα πρώτας ἀρτηρίας ἐλθόντος, ἔπειτα δὲ εἰς τε τὴν καρδίαν καὶ τὰς ἄλλας. See also *De usu respirationis*, 4.502: ἐκ τῆς εἰσπνοῆς [...] οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἐρασίστρατον [...] τρέφεσθαι φασὶ τὸ ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς καρδίας διὰ τῶν ἀρτηριῶν ἐπὶ τὰς μὴνιγγας [...] ἔρχεσθαι τὸ πνεῦμα δοκεῖ.

³¹³ Gal. *Ut. part.* 3.539-540: "the flesh of the lung appears light and full of pneuma, showing plainly that it was made to concoct the air, just as the flesh of the liver was made to concoct the nutriment. For it is reasonable that the outer air does not become the nutriment of the inborn pneuma suddenly and all at once; rather, it is altered gradually, just as the food is too, and over a period of time acquires the quality proper to the inborn pneuma [...] Now, when it becomes necessary to account for this in terms of the appropriateness or otherwise of the quality of pneuma, Erasistratus, I do not understand on what grounds, appeals to the thinness or thickness of its substance".

³¹⁴ Gal. *De nat. fac.* 2.93: ἀφελόμενος τὴν ἐλκτικὴν δύναμιν ἐπικαίρον αἰτιάται [ὁ Ἐρασίστρατος] θέσιν καὶ στομάτων στενότητα καὶ χώραν τινὰ κοινήν, εἰς ἣν

So much for Asclepiades and his antecedents. How does Aenesidemus come into the picture? As I have argued earlier when discussing *M.* 7.349, Aenesidemus' locating the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us is nothing more than a positive twist on the idea that there is no connate principle inside us. The breathed-soul theory plays an important role in the argument, because it makes the line of thought complete: inert air which is breathed in and out (our psychic pneuma) cannot have the power to guide us; this power is to be located in that-which-surrounds-us, which, *qua* external stimuli, activates the inner pneuma and makes it sense and think; and which, *qua* surrounding air, supplies the substance of our soul.³¹⁵ As a result, human beings change their mind on account of the different stimuli they happen to be excited by from outside, and also on account of the continuous process of replacement of their psychic substance (respiration).

The psychic flux motif underpins Aenesidemus' locating the ruling-part-of-the-soul outside us, and it is echoed in the Homeric verses quoted at Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.128 in connection with Heraclitus' making that-which-surrounds-us intelligent. As Eustathius rephrases the verses:

"Such is the mind of men as is the day which God brings about", that is, as are the affections that we undergo, such is our mind, which in everything conforms to external things, and shapes itself according to that which happens to take place.

True, the reference here is not to the material motion of the breath inward and outward, but to the instability of our states of mind. Nonetheless one may suppose that Aenesidemus regarded the two types of flux as co-implicated with one another, as Calcidius does in his account of Asclepiades' doctrine. Marcus Aurelius too offers an echo of Asclepiades: "As for your vital breath, consider what it is; a wind (ἄνεμος), and not always the same, but every single instant let out, and sucked in again".³¹⁶

παράγουσι. The matter under review is the secretion of bile and urine. However, Erasistratus' appeal to the size of the 'mouth' of organs here voices his overall explanatory framework, as Galen makes clear at *De nat. fac.* 2.80.

³¹⁵ On the ambivalence of Aenesidemus' τὸ περιέχον see below ch. V.1.

³¹⁶ 2.2: θέασαι δὲ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὅποῖόν τι ἐστὶν ἄνεμος, οὐδὲ αἰεὶ τὸ αὐτό, ἀλλὰ πάσης ὥρας ἐξεμοῦμενον καὶ πάλιν ροφούμενον. One may further observe that Cleanthes too in his account of Heraclitus' position at Eusebius *PE* 15.20.2 (=SVF 1.519), quoted below p. 179, echoes the motif of the flux of the soul, although on the different story that the soul is a blood-exhalation.

Tertullian admittedly couples Aenesidemus with Anaximenes, the first to posit that the soul is air. However, inferring on this basis that Anaximenes was Aenesidemus' source of inspiration would be mistaken. Aenesidemus' coupling with Anaximenes is due to his inclusion in a doxographical list which originally covered Presocratic philosophers alone. In fact, the fortune of the breathed-soul theory in the Hellenistic era is connected with the discovery of the cardiovascular and nervous systems, which seemed to explain why air inside the body accomplishes functions which inert air normally does not.³¹⁷ Thus, it is no accident if the breathed-soul theory spread far and wide among physicians. Philosophers, for their parts, were pursuing an account of the soul which distinguishes between breathed air and psychic pneuma.

The distinctively medical pedigree of the theory in the Hellenistic age makes it, I believe, implausible to think that Aenesidemus employs the theory independently of the medical debate surrounding it. This conclusion gains further support from the fact that eminent upholders of the thesis that breathing supplies the soul, such as Erasistratus and Asclepiades, both invoked ducts and channels, thus adopting the same explanatory framework that Aenesidemus also does when discussing whether the mind is the same as the senses, and how many 'parts' the soul has. To be sure, Aenesidemus had good reason for attributing to his Heraclitus an account of the soul which thematises the instability of thoughts and impressions. In this way he does away with any epistemology centred on reasoning, as well as challenging the reliability of sense reports, or at least of our interpretation of them.

Thus far I have been discussing why the Sceptic Aenesidemus should be interested in the breathed-soul theory. But on what basis did he attribute it to Heraclitus? How is one to reconcile it with Heraclitus' original position which makes the soul an exhalation of humours? Here Heraclitus appears to be in agreement with the Stoics. At least this is what Cleanthes maintains at Eusebius *PE* 15.20.2 (= *SVF* 1.519):

Citing Zeno's doctrines on the soul, for comparison with the other natural philosophers, Cleanthes says that Zeno, like Heraclitus, calls the soul a sentient exhalation. Heraclitus, who wanted to show that our souls are always supplied with nous by exhalation, likens them to

³¹⁷ This is criticism which Aristotle at *DA* 411a 7-20 addresses against earlier formulations of the breathed-soul theory.

rivers in these words: “On those who step into the same rivers a succession of different waters flows”, and “Souls are exhaled from moisture”. So Zeno like Heraclitus declares the soul to be an exhalation.³¹⁸

I shall not go into the vexed issue of the relevance of the flux motif to the claim that the soul is an exhalation.³¹⁹ My focus is on the claim as such. Its attribution to Heraclitus is already in Aristotle,³²⁰ but the Stoics, unlike Aristotle, were committed to this idea *in propria persona*. However, while the Stoics identify the humours whose exhalation nourishes the soul with internal humours, i.e. blood,³²¹ Heraclitus himself speaks of ‘humid element’,³²² thus leaving the origin of the exhalation in question unspecified. Is there any other candidate besides the Stoics’ blood? It seems so, according to Aetius 4 3.12, who reports that Heraclitus’ soul arises from both internal and external exhalations, this latter originating from seas and oceans. But how does this external exhalation supply the substance of our souls? The most obvious way, I believe, is that we inhale it via respiration. The two processes according to Aetius can be graphically expressed as follows :

Internal Origin of the Soul	External Origin
exhalation	Exhalation breathing?
Blood —————> The Soul	Sea —————> Cosmic Soul —————> Human Soul

Perhaps Heraclitus put forward both accounts. More likely is that he did not make it clear exactly what he had in mind. Be that as it may, the mainstream line of interpreting Heraclitus identifies the origin of the soul according to him as internal. By contrast, Aenesidemus’ making the soul breathed air looks like a reworking of the other

³¹⁸ Περὶ δὲ ψυχῆς Κλεάνθης μὲν τὰ Ζήνωνος δόγματα παρατιθέμενος πρὸς σύγκρισιν τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους φυσικοὺς φησιν ὅτι Ζήνων τὴν ψυχὴν λέγει αἰσθητικὴν ἀναθυμίασιν, καθάπερ Ἡράκλειτος, βουλόμενος γὰρ ἐμφανίσαι ὅτι αἱ ψυχὰι ἀναθυμιώμεναι νοεραὶ [ἕτεραι Diels νεαραὶ Meerwaldt] αἰεὶ γίνονται, εἰκασεν αὐτὰς τοῖς ποταμοῖς λέγων οὕτως ‘ποταμοῖσι τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσιν ἐμβαίνουσιν ἕτερα καὶ ἕτερα ὕδατα ἐπὶ ῥρεῖ’ καὶ ‘ψυχὰι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑγρῶν ἀναθυμιῶνται’. ἀναθυμίασιν μὲν οὖν ὁμοίως τῷ Ἡράκλειτῳ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀποφαίνει Ζήνων.

³¹⁹ On this passage see Long (1996), pp. 54-55, to whom I owe the translation.

³²⁰ DA 405a 25-29: Ἡράκλειτος τὴν ἀρχὴν εἶναι φησι ψυχὴν, εἴπερ τὴν ἀναθυμίασιν, ἐξ ἧς τὰλλα συνίστησιν κτλ.

³²¹ SVF 1.521 describes the soul as vital pneuma ‘nourished’ by evaporating blood.

³²² Her. Fr. 36: ἐξ ὕδατος [...] ψυχή.

account. Moreover, ancient commentators either tell, or at least imply, that the soul for Heraclitus is fiery.³²³ Thus, Aenesidemus' making the soul plain air goes beyond any exegesis of Heraclitus known to us.³²⁴

³²³ The second account too, which suggests that for Heraclitus we breathe the cosmic soul, is reconcilable with the idea that the soul is fiery, as long as the cosmic soul is thought to be fiery in the first place.

³²⁴ There seems to be evidence against attributing the breathed-soul theory to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus. This is found at Tert. *DA* 25: *Non in utero concipi animam nec cum carnis figulatione compingi atque produci, sed et effuso iam partu nondum vivo infanti extrinsecus imprimi; ceterum semen ex concubitu muliebribus locis sequestratum motuque naturali vegetatum compingescere in solam substantiam carnis; eam editam et de uteri fornace fumantem et calore solutam, ut ferrum ignitum et ibidem frigidae immersum, ita aeris rigore percussam et vim animalem rapere et vocalem sonum reddere. Hoc Stoici cum Aenesidemo et ipse interdum Plato, cum dicit perinde animam extraneam alias et extorrem uteri prima adspiratione nascentis infantis adduci sicut expiratione novissima educi.* On the face of it, Tertullian has Aenesidemus endorse the Stoic theory that the soul originates from the chilling of the inner heat by the first breath. This testimony is in sharp conflict with Aenesidemus' making the soul air at 9. For if breathing merely chills the inner heat, and if the soul originates from here, the soul as such will not consist of breathed air, but of inner heat refrigerated. However, on closer consideration, Tertullian here is in the middle of an argument against those who deny that the foetus is ensouled, the body and the soul being for these people two independent entities. This position is attributed to the Stoics, Aenesidemus and Plato. Plato's account of the origin of the soul, centred on metempsychosis, differs considerably from that of the Stoics, and yet the *vis polemica* leads Tertullian to assimilate the two accounts as both implying that the soul is posterior to the foetus. Aenesidemus' making the soul breathed air is sufficient to let Tertullian assimilate Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον to the Stoics and to Plato. While no identity of views between Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον and the Stoics is thus implied, it is nonetheless remarkable that the Stoics come into the picture here again, thus hinting at the possibility that Aenesidemus developed his account of Heraclitus on the basis of, or in response to, some Stoic antecedent. Waszink (1947), p. 321, the editor of the *De anima*, may be only partially right in suggesting that Tertullian "does not mean a special connection between Aenesidemus and the Stoics. It is possible that the mention of this philosopher here is due to a conclusion drawn by Tertullian himself from 9,5".

CHAPTER FIVE

SEXTUS ON HERACLITUS (*M.* 7.126-134)

V.1 *The Criterion of Truth*

A crucial piece of evidence on Aenesidemus' Heracliteanism is Sextus' account of Heraclitus' criterion of truth at *M.* 7.126-134. I have often referred to and quoted excerpts from this text, as it provides the only evidence on Aenesidemus' Heraclitus in which the sequence of thoughts is preserved. However, while the relevance of *M.* 7.126-134 to Aenesidemus is beyond doubt, his name is not mentioned, and there is disagreement on how this text relates to him: whether it is a pre-existing piece of Heraclitean exegesis, or whether Aenesidemus is the author. If the latter is the case, we would have an actual excerpt of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' work, and this would give us important indications as to what form his work took. If, on the contrary, the account is attributable to someone else, it would be a unique sample of Heraclitean exegesis from the Hellenistic age, and the direct antecedent of Aenesidemus'. However, before addressing the question whether Aenesidemus is the author, it is necessary to establish exactly how the account goes. To this purpose, I shall try to make the argument and the sequence of thoughts explicit.

We are in the Presocratic section of the account of the positions held by earlier philosophers on whether reason or the senses, or both, provide the criterion of truth, an account which occupies much of the seventh book of Sextus' work *Against the Professors*. Sextus argues that all Presocratics rejected the senses, and adopted reasoning as the only criterion of truth. However, he urges, each of these philosophers adopted a different kind of reason: reason in general (Anaxagoras); reason which is attained from the sciences (the Pythagoreans); opinionative reason (Xenophanes); epistemic reason (Parmenides); right reason (Empedocles); 'genuine knowledge', which Sextus equates with unqualified reason (Democritus). Heraclitus for his part goes for the common and divine kind of reason (126-127a):

Heraclitus, since he again supposed that man is furnished with two organs for gaining knowledge of truth, namely sensation and reason,

held, like the Physicists mentioned above, that of these organs sensation is untrustworthy, and assumes reason as the criterion. Sensation he convicts by saying expressly [fr. 107 follows]. Thus, he declares reason to be the judge of truth — not, however, any and every reason, but that which is common and divine.³²⁵

The agent of knowledge, the so-called criterion ὅφ' οὗ,³²⁶ has thus shifted from humans to god, and this makes Heraclitus' criterion different from that of any other philosopher. For it is normally assumed in antiquity that, if our cognitive access to things is under discussion, the agent of knowledge is inside us.³²⁷ Sextus himself shares this assumption,³²⁸ and it is the only hypothesis that he considers when arguing against the existence of a criterion.³²⁹ When it comes to expounding Heraclitus, however, Sextus does not seem to bother himself about the special nature of his criterion, and treats it as comparable to all others, in spite of the fact that he explicitly identifies Heraclitus' λόγος with the cosmic principle that surrounds the earth (127b): "But what this [Heraclitus' common and divine Reason] is must be explained concisely. It is a favourite tenet of our Physicist that that-which-surrounds-us is rational and intelligent".³³⁰ The expression 'that-which-surrounds-us' (τὸ περιέχον ἡμᾶς) is vague, and deliberately so, as we shall see, but any reader in antiquity would understand it as referring to the cosmic soul, not least because that-which-surrounds-us is alleged to be rational and intelligent. Thus, Sextus provides an exemplary document of the cosmological interpretation of Heraclitus' λόγος, an interpretation which is now controversial,³³¹ but which was authoritative in antiquity at least from the Stoics onward.

³²⁵ ὁ δὲ Ἡράκλειτος, ἐπεὶ πάλιν ἐδόκει δυσὶν ὀργανῶσθαι ὁ ἄνθρωπος πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας γνῶσιν, αἰσθήσει τε καὶ λόγῳ, τούτων τὴν μὲν αἰσθησὶν παραπλησίως τοῖς προειρημένους φυσικοῖς ἄπιστον εἶναι νενόμικεν, τὸν δὲ λόγον ὑποτίθεται κριτήριον. ἀλλὰ τὴν μὲν αἰσθησὶν ἐλέγχει λέγων κατὰ λέξιν [Fr. 107 follows]. τὸν δὲ λόγον κριτὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀποφαίνεται οὐ τὸν ὅποιονδήποτε, ἀλλὰ τὸν κοινὸν καὶ θεῖον.

³²⁶ On Sextus' classification and refutation of the criterion of truth see Long (1978).

³²⁷ Empedocles (Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.122), though considering 'divine reason' as a criterion of truth, adopts 'right (human) reason' instead, the only one available to us.

³²⁸ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.35; 37; 261; 343; *PH* 2.16.

³²⁹ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.263-289; *PH* 2.22-48.

³³⁰ τίς δ' ἐστὶν οὗτος [ὁ κοινὸς καὶ θεῖος λόγος], συντόμως ὑποδεικτέον. ἀρέσκει γὰρ τῷ φυσικῷ τὸ περιέχον ἡμᾶς λογικόν τε ὄν καὶ φρενήρες.

³³¹ West (1971), pp. 124-129, and, more recently, Robinson (1981), who suggest that the primary reference of Heraclitus' λόγος is nothing more than his own discourse.

In what follows Sextus goes on to claim that Heraclitus' making that-which-surrounds-us intelligent was anticipated by early poets (128):

Long before [Heraclitus], Homer had expressed the same view when he says: "As is the day which upon them is brought by the sire immortal, so are the minds of mortal humans". Archilochus too says that the thoughts humans think are "such as the day which Zeus doth bring about".³³²

It is not clear, however, on what basis Sextus advances this claim. It is certainly not the case that the verses quoted merely restate the idea previously attributed to Heraclitus. Their role appears to be, rather, that of elucidating the idea and drawing its consequences: if the cosmic god is the *sole* intelligent being (Sextus implies that this is the claim to which Heraclitus is committed), it follows that human beings have no thoughts, at least on their own. An echo of this interpretation of Heraclitus is found at M. 8.286: "Heraclitus maintains that human beings are not rational, only that-which-surrounds-us is intelligent".³³³ If humans are not themselves responsible for what they think, who is? It is the cosmic god, to whom they owe their thoughts.

So far we have what looks like a hard-line theistic epistemology. However, if the poetic verses quoted are a reliable source for reconstructing how, in Heraclitus' view, the cosmic Reason determines our thoughts, the reference is not to a direct and deliberate action of the god. It is, rather, external circumstances and their variation, "the day which Zeus brings about", that direct our thoughts and actions in one way or another. Euripides' invocation to Zeus quoted next makes the reasoning explicit, in that it identifies the source of our thoughts with physical necessity (such as the one which makes one day follow another), and identifies both with Zeus: "And the same thing has also been said by Euripides: Whatever you are, necessity of nature or mankind's intelligence, I invoke you, inapprehensible Zeus".³³⁴

³³² ἐμφαίνει δὲ τὸ τοιοῦτο πολὺ πρόσθεν Ὅμηρος εἰπών· τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων, οἷον ἐπ' ἡμᾶρ ἄγῃσι πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε. καὶ Ἀρχίλοχος δὲ φησὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοιαῦτα φρονεῖν ὅποιον Ζεὺς ἐφ' ἡμέρην ἄγει.

³³³ ὁ Ἡράκλειτός φησὶ τὸ μὴ εἶναι λογικὸν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, μόνον δ' ὑπάρχειν φρενῆρες τὸ περιέχον.

³³⁴ εἰρήται δὲ καὶ τῷ Εὐριπίδῃ τὸ αὐτό· ὅστις ποτ' εἴ σὺ δυστόπαστος εἰσιδεῖν Ζεὺς, εἴτ' ἀνάγκη φύσεος εἴτε νοὺς βροτῶν, ἐπευξάμην σε. I understand εἴτε... εἴτε as introducing two complementary, rather than alternative, descriptions of the supreme god.

So far so good: human beings are not intelligent on their own, only that-which-surrounds-us is so, and supplies us with thoughts. But how does the common λόγος surrounding us also provide cognitive access to truth? Sextus speaks of ‘partaking in it’ (κατὰ μετοχήν), and he sets forth two stages in which we do so: 1) inhaling the cosmic Reason in respiration, on the assumption that the cosmic Reason is identifiable with, or at least contained in the air we breathe; 2) being receptive to external stimuli, when our sensory channels let the mind reach the peripheral sensors, and thus connect us with the external world (129-131 *init.*):

It is, then, by inhaling this divine Reason during respiration that, according to Heraclitus, we acquire a mind, and, while forgetful during sleep, become intelligent on waking. For during sleep the sensory channels are closed, and hence the mind within us is cut off from its connection with that-which-surrounds-us, only contact by way of respiration, like that of a root, being preserved, and, being thus parted, the mind loses the power of memory which previously it possessed; but on waking it stretches out again through the sensory channels, as it were through windows, and by junction with that-which-surrounds-us is invested with the power of reason. Thus, just as cinders, when put close to the fire, are altered and become ignited, but are extinguished when put at a distance, in like manner the fraction of that-which-surrounds-us which stays as a stranger in our bodies becomes nearly deprived of reason during the separation, but, when it is connected via the numerous channels, it is made like in kind to the totality.³³⁵

As to the first stage of our partaking in the περιέχον/common λόγος, that is, by inhaling it, the identification of the cosmic Reason with air not only rests upon the ambiguity of the expression ‘that-which-surrounds-us’, but is also implied in Euripides’ invocation to Zeus, the original opening of which contains an allusion to air: ‘You, who sustain the earth and have your seat on it’,³³⁶ and which Diels

³³⁵ τοῦτον οὖν τὸν θεῖον λόγον καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον δι’ ἀναπνοῆς σπᾶσαντες νοεροὶ γινόμεθα, καὶ ἐν μὲν ὕπνοις ληθαῖοι, κατὰ δὲ ἔγερσιν πάλιν ἐμφρονες. ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ὕπνοις μυσάντων τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων χωρίζεται τῆς πρὸς τὸ περιέχον συμφυΐας ὃ ἐν ἡμῖν νοῦς, μόνῃς τῆς κατὰ ἀναπνοὴν προσφύσεως σωζομένης οἶονεῖ τιнос ρίζης, χωρισθεὶς τε ἀποβάλλει ἣν πρότερον εἶχε μνημονικὴν δύναμιν· ἐν δὲ ἐγρηγόρσει πάλιν διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων ὥσπερ διὰ τινων θυρίδων προκύψας καὶ τῷ περιέχοντι συμβαλὼν λογικὴν ἐνδύεται δύναμιν. ὅνπερ οὖν τρόπον οἱ ἀνθρακες πλησιάζαντες τῷ πυρὶ κατ’ ἀλλοίωσιν διάπυροι γίνονται, χωρισθέντες δὲ σβέννυνται, οὕτω καὶ ἡ ἐπιξενωθεῖσα τοῖς ἡμετέροις σώμασιν ἀπὸ τοῦ περιέχοντος μοῖρα κατὰ μὲν τὸν χωρισμὸν σχεδὸν ἄλογος γίνεται, κατὰ δὲ τὴν διὰ τῶν πλείστων πόρων σύμφυσιν ὁμοιοειδὴς τῷ ὅλῳ καθίσταται.

³³⁶ *Troad.* 884: γῆς ὄχημα κάπῃ γῆς ἔχων ἔδραν. The reason why the opening has been cut out in Sextus is probably because it restates the same idea as τὸ περιέχον, and therefore was perceived as redundant; or perhaps because the idea that the

therefore includes among the ‘imitations’ of Diogenes of Apollonia in his *Fragmentsammlung* of the Presocratics.

As to the claim that the sensory channels connect us with that-which-surrounds-us, the expression τὸ περιέχον undergoes yet another shift of meaning after the cosmo-theological and the physical-atmospheric one, indicating the things that lie before us and that we happen to see and deal with when awake. Von Arnim speaks of “die Summe der von außen auf den Menschen einströmenden Sinnes-eindrücke”.³³⁷ One may describe it as the epistemic meaning of τὸ περιέχον, a meaning which is perhaps already foreshadowed in the quotation of the poetic verses at 128.

Inhaling the cosmic Reason is alleged to make us νοεροί; having our channels open is said to make us ἔμφορες and, later, λογικοί. These adjectives look at first sight like synonyms. However, the line of argument requires that νοερός has a different meaning. It probably indicates “endowed with a mind (νοῦς)”, referring to the pneuma which accomplishes psychic functions, and the point, I believe, is that breathing supplies us with psychic matter. The adjective νοερός is not frequent in philosophical literature, but it also occurs in Cleanthes’ report that Heraclitus’ soul is an exhalation of blood: αἱ ψυχὰι ἀναθυμιώμεναι νοεραὶ αἰεὶ γίνονται.³³⁸ Here too the adjective arguably takes the meaning of “endowed with a mind”. The adjectives λογικός and ἔμφορος, in turn, probably describe a further stage of our participation in the cosmic Λόγος: they indicate a stage that is ‘intelligent’, i.e. ‘rational’ in a stricter sense, and one which conveys actual thinking. However, if the mere fact of being receptive of external stimuli is enough to make us ‘rational’ — and nothing in the text suggests that something more is required — the ‘mnemonic power’ and the ‘rationality’ under discussion will be co-extensive with sensation. Aenesidemus’ identification καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον of thinking with sensing at M. 7.349 makes the idea explicit.

Another of the reports on Aenesidemus καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον which is recalled here is that at M. 9.337:

And Aenesidemus interpreting Heraclitus says that the part is both other than the whole and the same; for substance is both whole and

earth rests on air is not Heraclitean (but Sextus does not seem to be concerned with the historical plausibility of his interpretation of Heraclitus).

³³⁷ Von Arnim (1888), p. 87.

³³⁸ Eusebius *PE* 15.20.2 = *SVF* 1.519. Diels supplies ἕτεροι, and Meerwaldt νοεραί, but the MS’s reading is secured by the Sextus parallel.

part, whole in the universe, but part in the nature of this particular animal.³³⁹

After stating the general principle, in typically Heraclitean style, that the part is the same as, and yet different from the whole, Aenesidemus goes on to consider a particular application of it, the case of substance (ἡ οὐσία), which, he claims, counts as a whole if the entire universe is considered, and as a part in the case of individual beings. Thus, Aenesidemus considered the apparent contradiction found in the general principle to be a mere matter of style: whole and part are the same thing under certain respects, and different things under other respects. As I have already observed when discussing the problem of conflicting appearances, neither Aenesidemus nor his Heraclitus denies the principle of non-contradiction. But in what sense might Aenesidemus have thought that our individual substance is identical with the cosmic one?

The term ‘substance’ in Stoic philosophy indicates the passive principle, that is, prime matter. If Aenesidemus is adopting the term in this meaning, the idea is that the material substrate of the universe is identical with the material substrate of each individual being. However, this interpretation can be refined. Heraclitus is a monist, and therefore his principle is not merely the substrate of things, but the all-embracing principle accomplishing the functions of both form and matter. For Aenesidemus’ Heraclitus this principle is air (*M.* 10.233). Since, for him, the soul is also air, one may suppose that the idea is that our individual soul is a portion of — and to that extent identifiable with — surrounding air. This reading gains support from the fact that Sextus at *M.* 7.130 calls our pneumatic soul ‘the portion of that-which-surrounds-us which is hosted in our bodies’.³⁴⁰ If indeed our individual soul is homogeneous with the cosmic substance, then the cosmic substance too is a soul. This last point is implied at *M.* 7.128, where Sextus describes the surrounding atmosphere in terms which normally apply to living beings: ‘rational’ and ‘intelligent’.

³³⁹ ὁ δὲ Αἰνισίδημος κατὰ Ἡράκλειτον καὶ ἕτερόν φησι τὸ μέρος τοῦ ὅλου καὶ ταυτόν· ἡ γὰρ οὐσία καὶ ὅλη ἐστὶ καὶ μέρος, ὅλη μὲν κατὰ τὸν κόσμον, μέρος δὲ κατὰ τὴν τοῦδε τοῦ ζώου φύσιν. The original context in Aenesidemus presumably was an exegesis of Her., Fr. 10: συλλάψιες ὅλα καὶ οὐχ ὅλα, as it has been suggested by Barnes (1988), p. 271 n. 74.

³⁴⁰ Sext. Emp. *M.* 7.130: ἡ ἐπιξενωθεῖσα τοῖς ἡμετέροις σώμασιν ἀπὸ τοῦ περιέχοντος μοῖρα.

If I am right, then the cosmological example advanced by Aenesidemus at M. 9.337 is not just one of the many examples which could be chosen, but the primary area of application which the principle in question has for Aenesidemus, and one which contributes to his interpretation of Heraclitus. For we know from Sextus M. 7.131-134 that the thesis that our soul is homogeneous with the surrounding atmosphere, in conjunction with other ideas, is an intermediate step of an argument which culminates in the identification of Heraclitus' truth with that-which appears-to-us-all:

Heraclitus, then, asserts that this common and divine Reason, by participation in which we become endowed with reason, is the criterion of truth. Hence, that-which-appears-to-us-all is trustworthy (for it is perceived by the divine and common Reason), but that which affects one person alone is, for the opposite reason, untrustworthy. Thus the man above-mentioned declares at the beginning of his work *On Nature*, pointing in a fashion to that-which-surrounds-us [Fr. 1 follows]. For having in these words expressly argued that we do and think everything through participation in the divine Reason, after proceeding a little further, he adds [Frs. 2 follows]. And this is nothing else than an explanation of the mode of arrangement of the universe. Therefore in so far as we share in the memory of that Reason we say what is true, but whenever we utter our own private thoughts, we lie. So here and in these words he most expressly declares that the common Reason is the criterion, and that that-which-appears-to-us-all is trustworthy as being judged by the common Reason, whereas that which appears privately to each man is false ³⁴¹

The transition from common λόγος to that-which-appears-to-us-all is abrupt. It is less so, however, if one considers that Sextus at M. 7.129-130 has already identified partaking in the common λόγος with perceiving external stimuli. What Sextus tells us now is that perceiving external stimuli is not enough for accessing the truth. Having one's senses active is a preliminary condition, but not all appearances are equally trustworthy. Only those which appear to us all are true —

³⁴¹ Τοῦτον δὴ τὸν κοινὸν λόγον καὶ θεῖον, καὶ οὐ κατὰ μετοχὴν γινόμεθα λογι-
κοί, κριτήριον ἀληθείας φησὶν ὁ Ἡράκλειτος. ὅθεν τὸ μὲν κοινῇ πᾶσι φαινόμενον,
τοῦτ' εἶναι πιστόν (τῷ κοινῷ γὰρ καὶ θεῷ λόγῳ λαμβάνεται), τὸ δὲ τινὶ μόνῳ
προσπίπτον ἄπιστον ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν αἰτίαν. ἐναρχόμενος γοῦν τῶν Περὶ
φύσεως ὁ προειρημένος ἀνὴρ, καὶ τρόπον τινὰ δεικνύς τὸ περιέχον, φησὶ [...] διὰ
τούτων γὰρ ῥητῶς παραστήσας, ὅτι κατὰ μετοχὴν τοῦ θείου λόγου πάντα πράττομέν τε
καὶ νοοῦμεν, ὀλίγα προσδιελθὼν ἐπιφέρει [...] ἡ δ' ἔστιν οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἀλλ' ἐξήγησις
τοῦ τρόπου τῆς τοῦ παντός διοικήσεως. διὸ καθ' ὃ τι ἂν αὐτοῦ τῆς μνήμης κοινωνή-
σωμεν, ἀληθεύομεν, ἃ δὲ ἂν ἰδίασθωμεν, ψευδόμεθα. νῦν γὰρ ῥητότατα καὶ ἐν τούτοις
τὸν κοινὸν λόγον κριτήριον ἀποφαίνεται, καὶ τὰ μὲν κοινῇ φησι φαινόμενα πιστὰ ὡς
ἂν τῷ κοινῷ κρινόμενα λόγῳ, τὰ δὲ κατ' ἰδίαν ἐκάστω ψευδῇ.

here we have a clear echo of Aenesidemus' criterion καθ' Ἡράκλειτον as reported at *M.* 8.8.

V.2 *Sextus and Aenesidemus*

Once we have seen how the account of Heraclitus at Sext. Emp., *M.* 7.126-134 develops, we are in a condition to make a few observations on it. A preliminary remark is that the criterion of truth which is attributed to Heraclitus is not a rationalist one. It would fall, perhaps, in the class of 'mixed' criteria, as Sextus calls them at 7.47, if not even in that of sensualist criteria, given that no intellectual insight into things is envisaged. Why then does Sextus present Heraclitus as a rationalist comparable to the others (126)? This is because a certain λόγος is involved. Yet the reference is not to a psychic function of human beings, but to the cosmic agent surrounding us (which at 128 turns out to be the only λόγος available), and this makes a substantial difference, as I have already observed.³⁴² Moreover, 'that-which-surrounds-us' undergoes yet another shift of reference in the course of the argument, losing its initial cosmo-theological import, and coming to indicate the external environment as such. How does the external environment provide a criterion of truth? The text says that when the senses connect us with the outside world, we achieve cognitive access to that-which-appears-to-us-all, and hence to the truth. Inferring from this that Heraclitus adopted reason, as *opposed to* sense-perception, as the only criterion of truth is clearly fallacious.

Thus we come to the question how this account relates to the doxography at *M.* 7.48-261 of which it is a part, and hence to the question of who is the author of the account. Some scholars thought his identity could be deduced from that of the author of the Pre-socratic section at *M.* 7.89-140, which, they think, is a compact excerpt from one and the same source (Antiochus according to Hirzel and Tarrant; Posidonius according to Sedley). However, besides the conjectural nature of any *Quellenforschung* of this kind, one cannot take for granted that the account of Heraclitus goes back to Sextus'

³⁴² See also Reinhardt (1926), p. 194: "was er [Sextus] zu widerlegen vorhat, ist: auch Heraklit verwirft die Sinne, um allein den Logos als Kriterium zu belassen. Aber wie reimt sich das mit jener pantheistisch-vitalistischen Erkenntnistheorie, die er hinzuzieht?" Likewise Burkhard (1973), p. 76: "Wenn Sextus den Logos [...] hier (§ 126) der Aisthesis gegenüberstellt, muß er hin im Sinne von διάνοια verstehen. In 127 aber [...] bedeutet 'Logos' gar nicht den menschlichen Verstand, sondern einen außermenschlichen, kosmischen Logos".

basic source. In spite of what Sextus claims at 126, the actual account of Heraclitus provided at 127-134 does not offer a rationalistic interpretation of the Presocratic, and therefore is not at home in the place where it has come down to us.

As a matter of fact, Aenesidemus is the only author known to us who attributed to Heraclitus the claim that only that-which-appears-to-us-all is true. Moreover, this claim voices ideas which are too distinctive of Aenesidemus to license the hypothesis that someone before him advanced it, let alone in connection with Heraclitus.³⁴³ Aenesidemus, one recalls, postdates both Posidonius and Antiochus, and if the final draft of the Heraclitean account, as found in Sextus, incorporates material from him, there remain two possibilities. One is that Aenesidemus is the author from whom the account has been excerpted. The other possibility is that the Heraclitean account does precede him, but did not originally mention any that-which-appears-to-us-all whatsoever, and that the reference to it has been interpolated at some stage in the transmission.

The latter view is that of Burkhard, who distinguishes between the physical account of the basic source (127-131 *init.*) and the additional epistemology contributed by Aenesidemus (131 *fin.*-134), and suggests that the physical account goes back to Posidonius. This hypothesis was in some way anticipated by Reinhardt, who argues extensively for Posidonius' authorship of the physical account, to be distinguished from that of the epistemological part.³⁴⁴ The Posidonius hypothesis, as it has been put forward by these scholars, does not rest upon identifying him as the basic source of Sextus' Presocratic section. On the contrary, Reinhardt and Burkhard suggest that the Heraclitean account was not originally conceived as a part of it.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ Reinhardt's hypothesis in Reinhardt (1926), p. 193 that "die Interpretation mag aus der Tradition der Heraklitkommentatoren stammen" is pure speculation.

³⁴⁴ Reinhardt (1926), p. 194 interprets the criterion of that-which-appears-to-us-all as indicating that the truth lies in what all humans *think*. On this basis he suggests that the epistemological part is perfectly at home in Sextus, and that it is only the physical account that has been interpolated; see Reinhardt (1926), p. 193: "das Fragment [sc. the physical account, which according to Reinhardt is a actual fragment of Posidonius] ist eine Einlage nicht anders als das über die Erkenntnistheorie der Pythagoreer". However, Reinhardt's interpretation of the criterion of that-which-appears-to-us-all as a *rationalist* criterion goes against Sextus' report at M. 8.8, where this criterion is presented as a sensualist one and therefore it is associated with Epicurus'. Reinhardt claims that M. 8.8 is just Aenesidemus, and that the passage at 131 *fin.*-134 need not be read along the same lines, but Reinhardt's proposal defies the principle of parsimony.

³⁴⁵ See above n. 342.

These scholars, Reinhardt in particular, argue for the Posidonius hypothesis by appealing to parallels in terminology and ideas between Sextus and Posidonius (on Reinhardt's very catholic survey of Posidonius' material).³⁴⁶ Against Reinhardt, one can say that the presence of Stoic material in the physical account, whether or not as extended as he supposes, by no means conflicts with the hypothesis that Aenesidemus is the author. Diels singles out the reference to 'breathing' the cosmic Reason as evidence to the effect that Aenesidemus is the author. Admittedly the notion of cosmic Reason is Stoic. However, the idea that the cosmic Reason is air to inhale is not. It is, in Diels' view, a fingerprint of Aenesidemus.³⁴⁷

The upholders of the Posidonius-hypothesis do not deny that Heraclitus' 'inhaling the cosmic Reason' at 129 and Aenesidemus' making the soul air have something in common, and yet they urge that the two doctrines are not exactly the same, and that the latter is merely derived from the former, the physical account at 127-131 *init.* being not a sample of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus, but rather an antecedent.³⁴⁸ This is in principle not impossible. However, if one is to make this point, one should provide either evidence or good reason to think that the Stoics did attribute to Heraclitus the non-Stoic idea that the cosmic Reason is air, in spite of the fact that both the Stoics and the real Heraclitus made the cosmic principle fiery. Hirzel suggests that the reference to 'inhaling the cosmic Reason' is not to air as such, but to a fiery substance which is found in it.³⁴⁹ A

³⁴⁶ Reinhardt (1926), pp. 201-202. A telling case of the perverse philological arguments used by Reinhardt is the following: Sextus at 130 says that, for Heraclitus, respiration is our only connection with the external world when asleep, and compares it to plants' being rooted in earth: μόνης τῆς κατὰ ἀναπνοὴν προσφύσεως σωζομένης οἶονεϊ τινοῦς ῥίζης. Reinhardt (1926), p. 202 relates this comparison to Cic. *Nat. deorum* 2.83: *stirpes terrae inhaerent, animantes autem adspiratione aeris sustinentur*. On this basis Reinhardt concludes that both Cicero and Sextus draw on a common source, which he identifies with Posidonius. The problem is that Reinhardt's list of parallels is incomplete. The comparison also occurs in Meno's account of Hippocrates at *Anon. Lond.* 4.19-31 (οἶονεϊ φυτὰ ὄντες προσεργιζώμεθα πρὸς τὸν αἶερα), and arguably goes back to Hellenistic physicians.

³⁴⁷ Sext. *Emp. M.* 10.233; Tert. *DA* 9, in which Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον makes the element of things and the soul, respectively, air.

³⁴⁸ Reinhardt (1926), p. 205: "Also muß geschlossen werden: wenn eine Berührung zwischen jenem Interpreten und Ainesidems 'Heraklitismus' anzunehmen ist, so kann sie keinesfalls damit erklärt werden, daß beide einerlei Person seien. Was allein in Frage kommt, ist, ob nicht der eine von dem anderen abhängt".

³⁴⁹ Hirzel (1883) III p. 71: "Kann die Luft auch als das Vehikel gedacht werden, durch das uns ein Teil des Principis zugeführt wird [...] Das Wort τὸ περιέχον könnte daher wohl in einer weiteren Bedeutung genommen werden, in der es außer der Luft auch das feurige Element begreift".

similar point is made by Reinhardt.³⁵⁰ However, it is *not* a Stoic theory that we become intelligent by inhaling the cosmic Reason, no matter whether in the form of plain air or whether with added fire.

In reply to this objection Burkhard, the most recent upholder of the Posidonius-hypothesis, contends that ‘inhaling the cosmic Reason’ ought not to be taken at face value as making us ‘intelligent’, which, he admits, is in conflict with Stoicism. The point is, rather, that it makes us ensouled, and Burkhard relates it to the Stoic idea that the first breath originates the soul by refrigerating the connate heat.³⁵¹ While Burkhard is, I believe, right in suggesting that inhaling the cosmic Reason does not make us ‘intelligent’, but merely supplies pneuma, the text makes it clear that inhaling νοῦς from outside is an ongoing process, related with every-day respiration: ‘by way of respiration we become endowed with a mind (δι’ ἀναπνοῆς [...] νοεροὶ γινόμεθα)’, and not something that just happened once and for all at the beginning, as Burkhard posits. Burkhard’s interpretation implies that there is no enduring physical exchange between our νοῦς and the cosmic Reason, but this interpretation defies what is asserted two lines later: “For during sleep [...] the only contact with that-which-surrounds-us [is] preserved by way of respiration, like that of a root” (ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις [...] μόνης τῆς κατὰ ἀναπνοὴν προσφύσεως σφζομένης οἶοιεί τινος ῥίζης). Therefore, I suggest that the reference is to the non-Stoic theory that breathing supplies us with psychic pneuma, whose medical pedigree I have investigated earlier.

Moreover, even if one were to grant this part of Burkhard’s argument, it would still remain to explain why the Stoic Posidonius should have identified Heraclitus’ cosmic Reason with air. Burkhard cannot deny that the reference is to plain air, as Reinhardt does, because the postulated link between Heraclitus’ inhaling the cosmic Reason and the Stoic theory of the first breath presupposes such a reference. Burkhard therefore appeals to Diller, who concedes that the reference is to air, and yet maintains that Posidonius may nonetheless be the source of the account, in that he may have

³⁵⁰ Reinhardt (1926), p. 202.

³⁵¹ Burkhard (1973), pp. 85-86. This is the idea which he claims to find also in Aenesidemus at Tert. *DA* 25 (= *SVF* 2.806), but erroneously so, as I have argued above n. 324. Burkhard also claims that this doctrine has some differences from the corresponding Stoic doctrine as reported at *SVF* 2.804, 806-808, and that it expresses, rather, a later formulation of it, attributable to Posidonius. But this is pure speculation.

incorporated excerpts from Diogenes Laertius of Apollonia.³⁵² Why should Posidonius introduce Diogenes Laertius of Apollonia while commenting on Heraclitus? Because Diogenes Laertius of Apollonia in the first place, Diller hypothesises, wrote an exegesis of Heraclitus in which he foisted his own ideas onto Heraclitus, and it is on Diogenes of Apollonia that later commentators, Posidonius included, draw. It is unfortunate that there is no supporting evidence for this set of speculations. As things stand, no satisfactory explanation has been given as to why a Stoic commentator should advance such a peculiar interpretation of Heraclitus. Aenesidemus remains the only plausible source.

If making Heraclitus' common λόγος air is Aenesidemus' interpretation, how did he derive it from Heraclitus? The interpretation may well have been invited by ambiguities in Heraclitus himself, who, while listing the τροπαί of the principle in fr. 31, counts fire and air as one and the same element, which he identifies as πρηστήρ ('burner'), presumably a gaseous substance between air and fire, which he thought to exhale from the sea.³⁵³ Related to the problem of identifying this substance is, perhaps, Diogenes Laertius' uncertainty as to the nature of Heraclitus' that-which-surrounds-us: 'Heraclitus does not make clear what that-which-surrounds-us is made of'.³⁵⁴ Cicero at *ND* 3.35 confirms that the Stoics for their part claimed Heraclitus as a precursor of their theory of a *fiery* cosmic agent:

But your school, Balbus [the Stoic speaker in the dialogue], uses to account for everything in terms of the power of fire, following, as I believe, Heraclitus, but not everybody interprets him in the same way.³⁵⁵

Interestingly, Cicero mentions the existence of alternative accounts of Heraclitus, which do not identify his principle with fire. These other accounts are perhaps the background to that of Aenesidemus. It remains a fact, however, that his interpretation of Heraclitus'

³⁵² Burkhard (1973), pp. 82-85; Diller (1941), pp. 375-381.

³⁵³ Her. Fr. 36: ἐξ ὕδατος πυρῆς. Diogenes Laertius' account of Heraclitus at 9.9, argued to be based on Theophrastus by Kerschensteiner (1955) and Kirk (1954), p. 24; 105 and *passim*, correctly mentions three τροπαί only, whereas Stoic imitations of Heraclitus, such as *SVF* 1.102 and Marc. Aurel. 4.46, plainly count four mutations of the material principle, distinguishing air from fire, so as to square the number of the τροπαί with that of the elements.

³⁵⁴ Diog. L. 9.9: τὸ περιέχον ὁποῖόν ἐστιν [ὁ Ἡράκλειτος] οὐ δῆλοι. The reference here is to the outer heaven, rather than the surrounding atmosphere, since the discussion concerns the origin of the stars as σφαῖραι of the heavenly sphere.

³⁵⁵ *Sed omnia vestri, Balbe, solent ad igneam vim referre, Heraclitum ut opinor sequentes, quem ipsum non omnes interpretantur uno modo.*

principle and cosmic soul as air finds no parallel elsewhere, and while it may not come completely out of the blue, Aenesidemus is here departing from any previous exegesis known to us, as I have already observed when discussing his attribution of the breathed-soul theory to Heraclitus (see above ch. IV.4).

While ‘inhaling’ the cosmic Reason was already cited by Diels against the hypothesis of a Stoic source, and has therefore set the scene for the aforementioned debate, there are in fact yet other non-Stoic elements in the physical account, which neither Diels nor later commentators have noticed.

The motif that that-which-surrounds-us is the sole intelligent being, as this is developed at 127-128, lends itself to more than one reading, and does not necessarily conflict with the hypothesis of a Stoic source. Evidence against this hypothesis is found, rather, in the account of sleep at 129-130. Partaking in the common λόγος is here described in terms of being awake and perceptive of external stimuli. This makes us λογικοί. By contrast, being asleep disconnects us from the external world, and thus makes us ἄλογοι. Commentators have usually assumed that this explanation voices Stoic philosophy, given that the Stoics too considered thinking to be inextricably linked with sensing,³⁵⁶ but the question here concerns whether or not this account of sleep is, as such, attributable to a Stoic source. The Stoics explain sleep in terms of a *quies solius corporis... non animi* (Tert. DA 43.2 = SVF 2.768). Thus, on the Stoic account, our soul is still active when we are asleep, although no longer capable of perceiving external stimuli. What sort of activity is the soul supposed to accomplish when we are asleep? Calcidius gives us the answer:

Indeed Heraclitus, and the Stoics with him, associate our reason with the divine one which governs and controls everything in the universe. On account of the indissoluble union of the two, our own reason is made acquainted with that which the cosmic reason has resolved, and reveals to us the future when our mind is resting from sensation.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Burkhard (1973), p. 90: “Wenn der Verstand im Menschen auf dem Wege über die geöffneten Sinnesorgane mit dem Umgebenden zu der Einheit zusammenwächst, in der ihm die λογική δύναμις zuteil wird, und — anders gesagt — die Sinne durch den Nus der Umwelt in Verbindung treten, so bedeutet das doch, daß Verstand und Sinne in ihrer Tätigkeit eine unlösbare Einheit bilden”.

³⁵⁷ Calcidius, *Comm in Plat. Tim.* ch. 251 p.260 W: *Heraclitus vero consentientibus Stoicis rationem nostram cum divina ratione connectit regente ac moderante numdana: propter inseparabilem comitatum consciam decreti rationabilis factam quiescentibus animis opere sensuum futura denuntiare.*

Thus, sleeping is not, for the Stoics, a separation of our reason from the cosmic one. On the contrary, it grants an even tighter connection between the two. The Calcidius passage is particularly relevant to our discussion because it shows that this very same idea is the one that the Stoics forced upon their Heraclitus. Sextus for his part makes the diametrically opposite point that we are disconnected from the common and divine Reason when asleep, and this lends further support to the hypothesis that he is not drawing on a Stoic source.³⁵⁸

If the account of sleep in Sextus is not Stoic, the questions arise of who originally put it forward, and also of who appropriated it for explaining Heraclitus. The two authors need not be the same person. The most distinctive element is the appeal to the sensory channels. The account of sensation based on anatomical channels has a medical pedigree, as I have already extensively argued. Aenesidemus appropriated it, probably via Strato. Thus, one may hypothesise that the account of sleep in Sextus, which presupposes that account of sensation, also goes back to Strato. It is unfortunate that we have very little evidence on Strato's explanation of sleep. We only know, from Tertullian's *De anima* 43.2, that Strato described sleep as a 'separation' (*segregatio*), presumably from the external world. The word *segregatio* translates Sextus' χωρισμός at 129. Admittedly, this agreement is not distinctive enough (nearly any ancient account of sleep comprises this or similar definitions). However, we do have a Peripatetic account of sleep which rests upon Strato's idea that sensation is carried out by our psychic pneuma with circulating through anatomical channels, and which therefore may well voice Strato's own account of sleep. This is found in the Aristotelian commentator John Philoponus (sixth century AD):

And during the digestion of the food we fall asleep on account of the blockage of the channels through which the sensory powers travel from the brain to the rest of the body. For sleeping is nothing else than a separation from sensation. This separation occurs because the

³⁵⁸ True, Stoic commentators too would have to explain in one way or another the reference to sleep in Her. Fr. 1: "As to the rest of mankind, all the things they are doing when awake escape their notice, just as they are not aware of what goes on when asleep". But, of course, Heraclitus' comparison between those who do not understand the λόγος and sleepers entails no actual identification between being unwise and being asleep. A Stoic commentator would have presumably regarded it simply as a figurative expression, and one which does not commit Heraclitus to any specific account of sleep. Sextus, by contrast, makes the point that being awake and perceptive is, as such, enough to let us partake of the λόγος and reach the truth (130 *fin.*-131 *init.*).

channels which carry the sensory pneuma are obstructed by the exhalations which are caused by digestion and which prevent the pneuma from travelling through the body. But as soon as the food is assimilated and the exhalations terminate after digestion, the channels of the sensory pneuma become open again, and we wake up.³⁵⁹

This text provides the closest parallel to Sextus. While both Philoponus and Sextus explain the functioning of our sense-apparatus when awake in terms of the opening of the channels, there is, however, a noticeable difference in presentation: Sextus invokes the activity of the channels in order to make the point that our individual soul is akin to the cosmic one, whereas no trace of this point is found in Philoponus. If Heraclitus' account of sleep in Sextus is modelled upon Strato's, and neither is Stoic nor voices Stoic views, why does it incorporate the aforementioned Stoic-coloured, 'Posidonian' motif? Why should a non-Stoic commentator be willing to put on Stoic clothes?

Thus, on the face of it, in spite of the fact that the account as such is not Stoic, the hypothesis of an intermediate Stoic source is attractive. However, there are several points against such a hypothesis. First, the Stoics never appeal to channels: why should they do so for explaining Heraclitus? Secondly, the functioning of the sensory channels in Sextus is meant to support the claim that we are detached from truth when asleep, and this is neither a Stoic doctrine, nor consistent with the Stoic interpretation of Heraclitus, as reported by Calcidius. Thirdly, the idea that we inhale our νοῦς in respiration is not Stoic either, and yet it is right in the middle of the physical account allegedly excerpted from Posidonius. Fourthly, those who argue for a Stoic source of the physical account by appealing to the presence of Stoic terminology and ideas do not consider that the additional epistemology at M. 131-134 also contains Stoic terminology. Why split the account into two parts and postulate a change of sources?

³⁵⁹ *Comm. In Arist. Phys.* 259b6, CAG 17.890: καὶ τῆς τροφῆς πεττομένης μὲν καθεύδουσι τῷ πληροῦν τοὺς πόρους δι' ὧν αἱ αἰσθητικαὶ δυνάμεις φέρονται ἐκ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου ἐπὶ τὸ λοιπὸν σῶμα (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ἐστὶν ὁ ὕπνος ἢ ἡρεμία αἰσθήσεων, αὕτη δὲ γίνεται τῶν ἐκ τῆς πέψεως ἀτμῶν πληρούντων τοὺς πόρους, δι' ὧν τὸ αἰσθητικὸν διικνεῖται πνεῦμα, καὶ κωλύοντων φέρεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸ σῶμα), ὅταν δὲ ἤδη διακρίνηται ἡ τροφή καὶ διαφορῇται μετὰ τὴν πέψιν τὰ περιττώματα, τότε γίνεται καὶ ἡ ἐγρήγορσις τῶν πόρων τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ πνεύματος διαφορηθέντων. Aristotle, the author on whom Philoponus is commenting, never appeals to the obstruction of the channels in order to explain why we are not perceptive during sleep.

As a matter of fact, the appeal to Strato's channels and the echo to the breathed-soul theory in the physical account are both pieces of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus, no less than the reference to that-which-appears-to-us-all in the additional epistemology, and hypothesising that an earlier Stoic commentator anticipated such distinctive pieces of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus is simply implausible.

Thus, Sextus' account of Heraclitus does not consist of two self-contained and independent parts, a Stoic and an Aenesideman one. On the contrary, Stoic and Aenesideman material overlap with one another throughout the entire exposition. This can be explained in two ways. One explanation is that a Stoicising account of Heraclitus' criterion was already available in the *Hauptquelle* of the Presocratic section, and Sextus, or his intermediate source, merged it with Aenesidemus' own. The other explanation is that the entire Heraclitean account is a sample of Aenesidemus' work, the contamination between Stoic and non-Stoic material found in it being attributable already to Aenesidemus himself. The former explanation, that Sextus, or his source, interpolated Aenesideman material into a pre-existing account of Heraclitus, may be hypothetically acceptable, but it is less economical than the other. Moreover, it is difficult to find a plausible reason why Sextus, or his source, should engage themselves in doing so, in view of the fact that the added material from Aenesidemus brings about an interpretation of Heraclitus which conflicts with the one Sextus initially advocates. Preserving in its original form the postulated pre-existing Stoic account centred on the cosmic Reason would probably have done the job better. The same difficulty faces the hypothesis that Sextus' intermediate source is Aenesidemus himself:³⁶⁰ however fond Aenesidemus may have been of his Heraclitus, it remains a fact that not even Aenesidemus, were he the transmitter of the doxography on the Presocratics, would have a plausible enough reason for interpolating the rationalist Heraclitus with his own, if the goal is to argue that Heraclitus rejects sense-perception (*M.* 7.126).

For all these reasons I find more palatable the alternative explanation that Sextus, or his source, excerpted from Aenesidemus the

³⁶⁰ This hypothesis has been advanced by Sedley 1992, who identifies Aenesidemus as the author of the section which covers those who denied the existence of a criterion of truth (*M.* 7.48-88), and on this basis suggests that Aenesidemus might be Sextus' intermediate source for the doxographical section in its entirety.

whole of the Heraclitean account (except 126, which binds it to the rest of the doxography), this being a sample of Aenesidemus' Heraclitean work. As I have observed, the account of Heraclitus does not support Sextus' initial claim at 126, and one may wonder why Sextus (or his intermediate source) did not use more suitable material. Perhaps Aenesidemus was the author most easily accessible to him who addressed the question of how Heraclitus' common λόγος provides a criterion of truth. By adopting this account I am not committed to the implausible assumption that Sextus' basic source discussed all Presocratics except Heraclitus. The assumption to which I am committed is, rather, that the Presocratic section has been assembled only after Aenesidemus, who is one of the sources employed along with Posidonius and perhaps someone else.

V.3 *Interpreting Heraclitus*

Identifying Aenesidemus as the author of Sextus' account of Heraclitus at 127-134 may enable us to answer the vexed question of why his interpretation of Heraclitus incorporates Stoic ideas and expressions. From a closer consideration of the way in which Stoic and non-Stoic elements relate to each other in Sextus, it emerges that they are not juxtaposed at random, but correspond to two strata, each of them playing a different role in the account. The Stoic stratum materially frames the quotations from Heraclitus and provides a basic reading of them, whereas the stratum which displays distinctively Aenesidemian features takes the form of glosses on the Stoic interpretation. This is particularly clear in the concluding argument concerning the criterion of that-which-appears-to-us-all.

Three strata are thus identifiable: the first is Heraclitus' original words; the second is a Stoic explanation of them; the third is Aenesidemus' own explanation of the Stoic explanation of Heraclitus. If the Heraclitean account at M. 7.127-134 is a reliable sample of Aenesidemus' work, then we must conclude that Aenesidemus' work too was arranged in such a fashion, and consisted of notes on a Stoic exegesis. And I suspect that this Stoic exegesis was an actual word-by-word commentary on Heraclitus. For the reference to the position which fr. 2 has in relation to fr. 1 at 133 (ὀλίγα προδιελθὼν ἐπιφέρει κτλ.) suggests that whoever composed it was not quoting from an anthology, but was working on a real manuscript of Heraclitus' book — something which the authors of outline reports are not normally

expected to do. Furthermore, the way in which Her. fr. 2 is glossed at 133 is distinctively exegetical: διὸ δεῖ ἔπεσθαι <τῷ ξυνῶ τουτέστι> τῷ κοινῶ (ξυνὸς γὰρ ὁ κοινός).³⁶¹

Why did Aenesidemus follow this elaborate procedure, which in a sense committed him to the Stoic interpretation, rather than commenting directly on Heraclitus and providing a self-reliant interpretation? For those scholars who adopt the *reductio ad absurdum* hypothesis the answer is straightforward: Aenesidemus appropriated Stoic material in order to overturn the original meaning of certain Stoic ideas and urge unwelcome consequences. As a matter of fact, if the description of the Heraclitean account that I have offered at the beginning is correct, it is hardly questionable that the original meaning of the Stoic notions and ideas which it incorporates is overturned in the course of the explanation. However, it is not true that they are reduced to absurdities. On the contrary, a compact and internally consistent set of ideas is attributed to the Stoic Heraclitus, which suggests a reading of Heraclitus in reductionist and phenomenalist terms. Thus, an explanation in purely dialectical terms is unsatisfactory. One may wonder whether other and more attractive explanations can be offered. I shall advance one.

Although the possibility cannot be ruled out that Aenesidemus had access to Heraclitus' book, it should by no means be taken for granted that he actually consulted it directly. A significant number of the Heraclitean fragments which have come down to us from late antiquity are transmitted within Stoic material, sometimes even intimately absorbed within Stoic glosses.³⁶² Transmitting the original texts of early authors added with glosses is not unusual in antiquity. But in the case of Heraclitus this must have been an even more general procedure on account of his widely acknowledged *obscuritas* — the fact that Heraclitus is the only author of whom Diog. L. 9.15 reports a list of exegetes is telling. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence that Heraclitus' book was still circulating in its original form

³⁶¹ The supplement makes the exegetical nature of the passage even more explicit, but the parenthetical sentence alone ξυνὸς γὰρ ὁ κοινός is enough to secure the point.

³⁶² The most telling case is Marcus Aurelius 4.46 (= 22 B 72 DK): ὃ μάλιστα διηλεκτῶς ὁμιλοῦσι [λόγῳ τῷ τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦντι] τούτῳ διαφέρονται, in which the reference to the cosmic reason is now unanimously interpreted as a Stoic gloss. Marcus Aurelius took it to be a part of the original text because, I believe, the way in which the fragment came down to him no longer enabled the reader to understand what belongs to whom.

during the Hellenistic era: the latest evidence available refers to the time of Socrates (Diog. L. 2.22), and while it is plausible to assume that early commentators on Heraclitus such as Heraclides Ponticus and Cleanthes still read him, this assumption becomes speculation in the case of authors as late as Aenesidemus. If so, Aenesidemus' incorporation of Stoic material need not be merely for polemical purposes, but may also relate to the way in which he composed his Heraclitean work, and, at bottom, to the way in which Heraclitus is transmitted during the Hellenistic era. After all, if I am to approach an obscure writer, I consult a handbook, and, if I also need the text, I then consult a version with commentary, preferably an authoritative one, rather than the bare text.³⁶³ The authoritative exegesis of Heraclitus in Aenesidemus' day was the Stoic one.

As to the identity of Aenesidemus' basic source, I am inclined to think that it is Cleanthes. What leads me to this supposition is not only the fact that Cleanthes is the only eminent Stoic whom we know to have written an exegesis on Heraclitus (the other Stoic commentator is his pupil Sphaerus; Diog. L. 9.15)³⁶⁴, but also the emphasis on 'what is common', as opposed to 'what is individual', which dominates the Heraclitean account in Sextus, and which is a distinctive feature of Cleanthes' thought as against that of other Stoics.³⁶⁵

For all these reasons Cleanthes is, I believe, a suitable candidate for being the author of the Stoic stratum of Aenesidemus' introduction to Heraclitus. Of course, the one-sided emphasis on 'what is common' is already in Heraclitus, and any commentator, whatever his views, would have to deal with it, but this consideration by no means conflicts with the Cleanthes hypothesis. On the contrary, it explains why Cleanthes and his pupil Sphaerus are, for all we know, the only Stoics who wrote a word-by-word commentary on Heraclitus:

³⁶³ A modern analogy for what I have in mind is the case of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which even Italian readers invariably consult in editions with commentaries.

³⁶⁴ It is possible that the Aristo whose work on Heraclitus is mentioned by Diog. L. 9.5 is the Stoic dissident, rather than his Peripatetic namesake (Long (1996), p. 39 n. 15). At any rate, his work *On Heraclitus* was not a commentary.

³⁶⁵ Diog. L. 7.89: "By the nature with which our life ought to be in accord, Chrysippus understands both universal nature and more particularly the nature of man, whereas Cleanthes takes the nature of the universe alone as that which should be followed, without adding the nature of the individual" (φύσιν δὲ Χρύσιππος μὲν ἐξακούει ἢ ἀκολουθῶς δεῖ ζῆν, τὴν κοινὴν καὶ ἰδίως τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην· ὁ δὲ Κλεάνθης τὴν κοινὴν μόνην ἐνδέχεται φύσιν, ἢ ἀκολουθεῖν δεῖ, οὐκέτι δὲ καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ μέρους).

they felt sympathetic with Heraclitus more than any other Stoic.³⁶⁶ However, the fact that Sextus at *M.* 10.216-217 attributes to Aenesidemus' Heraclitus a sixfold division of the parts of speech which is elsewhere attested only for Antipater might be taken to suggest that Aenesidemus' direct source is not Cleanthes, but a later Stoic account of Heraclitus incorporating parts of it.

But what precise form did Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' work take? We know that it was entitled *First Introduction*. An εἰσαγωγή does not technically count as an ἐξήγησις (line-by-line commentary). However, the two genres are closely connected. Porphyry's *Introduction*, for instance, is an introduction to his commentary on the *Categories*. One might speculate, by analogy with the case of Porphyry, that Aenesidemus composed not only an introduction, but also an actual commentary on Heraclitus' book, of which *M.* 7.127-134 might have been an excerpt. However, even a simple *Introduction* can include the quotation of selected parts of the book 'introduced' and some exegetical notes. Moreover, *M.* 7.127-134 does not provide, and therefore is not likely to be an excerpt from, an actual word-by-word commentary on Heraclitus, in that it omits the parts of Heraclitus' book between fr. 1 and fr. 2.³⁶⁷

A potentially closer parallel, then, is the case of Stephanus of Alexandria, who describes his *Scholia on Hippocrates' De fracturis* as an introduction to it, and also as complementary to the commentary that Galen wrote on Hippocrates.³⁶⁸ Stephanus' scholia offer a general presentation of the matter under discussion, with references to Hippocrates' words. Aenesidemus' way of presenting Heraclitus, at least to judge from *M.* 7.127-134, is not very different. Moreover, Stephanus' scholia echo, or indeed incorporate, elements of the pre-existing exegesis by Galen, in a way in which Aenesidemus' account of Heraclitus also does with respect to his Stoic source. The main difference is that Aenesidemus' reworking of the Stoic exegesis of Heraclitus does not purport to provide an outline account of it, but advances substantially different points. Moreover, while Stephanus is happy to acknowledge Galen's superiority, Aenesidemus is in

³⁶⁶ On Cleanthes and Heraclitus see Long (1975/6) (= Long (1996) pp. 35-57), who also provides a detailed and still useful *status quaestionis*.

³⁶⁷ Sextus does not leave room for doubt that in Heraclitus' original book something came in between: ὀλίγα προδιελθὼν κτλ.

³⁶⁸ *Scholia in Hipp. de fracturis* 23: ἐπεὶ δὲ περὶ καταγμάτων πρόκειται τῷ Ἱπποκράτει λέγειν, τῷ δὲ Γαληνῷ τὸν τοῦτου ἐξηγήσασθαι λόγον, ἡμῖν δὲ ὥσπερ εἰσαγωγὴν τινα τὰ παρόντα προσθεῖναι κτλ.

competition with his Stoic source, as indeed with any other pre-existing, non-Sceptic exegesis of Heraclitus, to judge from his claim that Scepticism provides a path towards the understanding of Heraclitus, this path, one may assume, being alternative to other paths, if not the only correct one.

The hypothesis that Aenesidemus is reworking a pre-existing and authoritative Stoic account of Heraclitus in the way I suggest also has the merit of accounting for the gaps which the argument in Sextus evinces. These gaps are so abrupt that one has the impression that they presuppose close acquaintance with some earlier exegesis. Perhaps individual words or expressions in it were enough for readers to understand the reference, and thus to supply parts of the argument. At least this appears to be the case with the expression δι' ἀναπνοῆς νοεροὶ γινόμεθα at 129, which echoes Cleanthes' αἱ ψυχαὶ ἀναθυμιάμεναι νοεραὶ ἀεὶ γίνονται.³⁶⁹ Once the reference is acknowledged, readers simultaneously understand the topic under discussion (the nature and origin of our soul), and also appreciate the novelty of Aenesidemus' own interpretation.

V.4 *Common Reason*

I shall now return to a very odd, and yet crucial argumentative passage found in Sextus, and show how my proposed identification of two strata besides Heraclitus' original words (a Stoic exegesis of them onto which Aenesidemus has superimposed his own glosses) provides the key for making best sense of it.

When discussing the relationship between Heraclitus' common λόγος and Aenesidemus' 'that-which-appears-to-us-all' at 131 *fin.*, I observed that Sextus switches from the former to the latter without any further explanation.³⁷⁰ This seemingly abrupt manoeuvre is justified in the context by the preceding identification of partaking in the common λόγος with being awake and perceptive of external stimuli (128-131 *init.*). However, it is hard to believe that Aenesidemus hoped to persuade his readers that the common λόγος (so far described as a cosmic god) gives cognitive access to that-which-appears-to-us-all on these grounds. It is not so much a problem of

³⁶⁹ Eusebius *PE* 15.20.2 (=SVF 1.519), quoted above in its entirety.

³⁷⁰ τοῦτον δὴ τὸν κοινὸν λόγον καὶ θεῖον, καὶ οὐ κατὰ μετοχὴν γινόμεθα λογικοί, κριτήριον ἀληθείας φησὶν ὁ Ἡράκλειτος. ὅθεν τὸ μὲν κοινὴ πᾶσι φαινόμενον, τοῦτ' εἶναι πιστόν (τῷ κοινῷ γὰρ καὶ θεῷ λόγῳ λαμβάνεται), τὸ δὲ τινὶ μόνῳ προσπίπτον ἄπιστον ὑπάρχειν διὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν αἰτίαν.

making sense of how Aenesidemus could generically make this claim — Heraclitus lends himself to such an interpretation, as we have seen.³⁷¹ It is rather a problem of how Aenesidemus could reasonably make this claim with reference to the Stoic-coloured cosmic entity with which he has initially identified Heraclitus' λόγος. For, on the face of it, we are still dealing with this entity (τοῦτον δὴ τὸν κοινὸν λόγον καὶ θεῖον κτλ), and this makes the line of argument difficult to follow. Therefore I suggest that the actual reference here is no longer to the Stoic-coloured common λόγος which was initially under discussion, but to another common λόγος available in Aenesidemus' day, which he has superimposed onto the Stoicising one, and which one may reasonably present as providing cognitive access to that-which-appears-to-us-all.

What is this other common λόγος in question then? A very interesting technical usage of the expression is found in Galen, who wrote a treatise in two books, now lost, specifically devoted to the subject (Gal. *Libr. prop.* 19.44; *Hipp off. med.* 18b.659). Galen's 'common reason' is not, of course, a cosmic god. It is a 'natural' criterion for accessing truths on which virtually everybody agrees (Gal. *Hipp. Progn.* 18b.26; *Hipp off. med.* 18b.659). Galen makes it clear that he owes this notion, at least in its embryonic form, to the Empiricists (Gal. *Comp. med.* 13.366). The context is a discussion of the different ways in which, according to the Empiricists, drugs are discovered. Almost all drugs, they maintain, have been discovered by chance. However, the Empiricists allow that a small number of drugs might have been discovered with the aid of some reasoning. This is not, though, the theoretical reasoning of the 'Rationalist' doctors, but "a kind of reasoning which is universally known and used, and which they [humans] all employ, and concerning which there is complete unanimity, and which refers to visible things alone" (*Med. Exper.* 135 *fin.*). The Empiricists also call it ἐπιλογισμός (Gal. *Comp. med.* 13.366), which, in turn, is spelled out in terms of λόγος τῶν φαινομένων (Gal. *Sect. intr.* 1.78).

In the twelfth chapter of his *Subfiguratio empirica*, edited by Deichgräber under the heading: "die Stellung der Empiriker zur communis ratio", Galen points to Heraclides Tarantinus, the putative teacher of Aenesidemus, as the first Empiricist to posit this special reasoning. Earlier Empiricists admitted sense-perception and memory alone, presumably assigning to memory functions, such as data elaboration,

³⁷¹ See ch. II.3.

that one would describe, rather, as intellectual. It is not clear why, but Heraclides was no longer happy with this solution. Perhaps he was compelled to posit reasoning in reply to the criticism that producing arguments against the opponents, as the Empiricists did, presupposes the ability to assess whether or not an argument is sound (this is suggested by Galen at *Subfig. emp.* p. 87 D.). Aenesidemus not only is acquainted with the ἐπιλογισμός, but he employs this word in order to describe his anti-dogmatic arguments.³⁷²

Galen describes Heraclides as a better physician than his epigon Menodotus, complaining that the latter does formally allow reasoning, but in effect is always found invoking the senses and memory alone.³⁷³ This suggests that: 1) after Heraclides it became normal for the Empiricists to count a certain kind of reasoning among their standards; 2) whatever Heraclides' original intention, later Empiricists such as Menodotus did not regard positing this reasoning as introducing any substantial novelty into their epistemology. Frede puts much emphasis on Heraclides' alleged rationalism.³⁷⁴ However, the Empiricists' common reasoning does not go beyond a rudimentary ability: 1) to draw commonsensical inferences (ἐπιλογισμοί) from observational data; 2) to judge what follows and what is incompatible in arguments. Thus, the only thing one can safely say is that Heraclides passed from plainly denying the existence of any rational power in us to allowing one, which is refutative of the opponents' own reasoning (dialectical use of reasoning, to be distinguished from a positive one), and complementary and subordinate to sense-perception and memory.³⁷⁵ The core of the Empiricist's theory of knowledge remains, I believe, untouched.

³⁷² Phot. *Bibl.* 212 170b 3-8. The term also occurs in Epicurean literature; see Schofield (1996).

³⁷³ See p. 87 *fin.*: *multotiens quidem introducens aliud tertium preter memoriam et sensum et vocans epilogismum hoc tertium, multotiens autem et preter memoriam nihil aliud ponens quam sensum.*

³⁷⁴ Frede (1988).

³⁷⁵ Frede makes his case also by referring to certain allegedly theoretical views which Heraclides entertained. However, (1) Heraclides was a Herophilean before joining the Empiricist school, and at least some of these views may well belong to his Herophilean period, rather than to the Empiricist one; (2) even if we admit that they belong to his Empiricist period, it is not clear whether Heraclides *himself* regarded them as involving theoretical reasoning; (3) later Empiricists, though positing 'common' reason, will carefully refrain from endorsing theoretical views, and this suggests that exploring theoretical issues was not one of the jobs normally attributed to common reason (Galen himself at *Med. Exper.* 135 *fin.* makes it clear that common reasoning "refers to visible things only").

Is the common λόγος using which we gain knowledge of ‘that-whichappears-to-us-all’ at Sextus *M.* 7.131 *fin.*-134 identifiable with the Empiricists’ common reasoning? It is true that the common λόγος of which Sextus speaks is still, in context, the Stoicising cosmic Reason previously alluded to, and, of course, the Empiricists’ and the Stoics’ common reasons are nothing more than homonyms. This consideration, however, does not conflict with the hypothesis that Aenesidemus’ reference is to the Empiricists’ common reasoning: Sextus’ account of Heraclitus rests upon switching from one reference to the other of the terms and notions involved (the case of τὸ περιέχον is telling). This may be considered to be the natural outcome of recycling someone else’s words while adopting a different conceptual framework. In order to justify it, Aenesidemus could also appeal to Heraclitus’ view that words are by nature, and thus that homonyms are such not by chance, but because their different meanings are all co-implicated and in some way interchangeable. But this is just speculation. It remains a fact, however, that Sextus’ argument concerning that-whichappears-to-us-all receives its point from the identification of the common λόγος under discussion at 131 *fin.*-134 with a cognitive faculty, such as the Empiricists’ common reasoning, which “we humans all employ, and concerning which there is complete unanimity, and which refers to visible things alone”.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ Boys-Stones (1998) pinpoints the existence of another Stoic ‘common reason’ besides the cosmic agent. This other Stoic λόγος provides cognitive access to common notions such as the idea of god. This λόγος, evidence of which is surprisingly meagre, might be Aenesidemus’ reference at 131 *fin.*-134. However, the Stoic common notions and that-whichappears-to-us-all are not the same thing, and therefore it would remain for us to explain how Aenesidemus inferred the latter from the former. The most obvious explanation seems to me to be, again, that Aenesidemus at 131 *fin.*-134 understood ‘common reason’ in the light of the Empiricists’ notion of it.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I shall return to my initial agenda, as set forth in the introduction, and discuss how my interpretation of Aenesidemus and Heraclitus deals with the difficulties which I have singled out, and how it relates to the *status quaestionis*.

Most commentators, assuming that Aenesidemus' making Scepticism a path towards Heraclitus presupposes allegiance to Heracliteanism, have identified the question of whether this attitude to Heraclitus is compatible with Scepticism as lying at the heart of the problem. Thus, as we have seen, some commentators have postulated the existence of a separate dogmatic phase, in which Aenesidemus was committed to Heracliteanism. Others have pursued an account in which Scepticism and Heracliteanism are for Aenesidemus one and the same thing. My view is that Aenesidemus never invoked Heraclitus as an authority to follow: his point in making Scepticism a path towards the philosophy of Heraclitus is merely that Scepticism offers a tool for interpreting Heraclitus.

The hypothesis that Aenesidemus' interest in Heraclitus is also, or primarily, an exegetical one is not, as such, a novelty. It can be traced as far back as Diels, except that Diels was at loss as to how to reconcile it with the evidence available. Von Arnim is the first to provide arguments to the effect that Aenesidemus' description of Scepticism as a path towards Heracliteanism did not commit him to the latter (Von Arnim's emphasis is, however, on the affinity between Scepticism and Heracliteanism). The interpretation was then developed by Schmekel, and, more recently, by Burkhard. My own contribution is, I hope, to reinforce arguments to that effect, and to show that the topic of the suitability of Scepticism as a tool for interpreting Heraclitus is the primary reference point of Aenesidemus' 'path' claim, not merely one of its implications.

However, the consideration that we are dealing with an interpretation of Heraclitus only shifts the terms of our problem, and does not solve it. It remains to be discussed how, for Aenesidemus, Scepticism actually provides a path towards the understanding of the philosophy of Heraclitus. Schmekel, who devotes to Aenesidemus only a couple of pages of his work on 'positive' philosophy in antiquity, fails to

address this question, or even, it seems, to identify it. His primary concern is to free Aenesidemus from the allegation of having been a follower of Heraclitus at some stage in his career. But the question of what one finds along Aenesidemus' path towards Heraclitus is no less important than that concerning his commitment or otherwise to the Presocratic, so obscure and controversial are the theses which Aenesidemus attributes to Heraclitus. The only systematic discussion available to readers is that of Burkhard.³⁷⁷ He argues that Aenesidemus as a Sceptical authority is not likely to have committed himself to the doctrines which he attributes to Heraclitus (and which Burkhard interprets as variations on Stoic themes), and that there is no actual need to postulate that Aenesidemus *καθ' Ἡράκλειτον* did so either, on account of the exegetical context in which he put them forward. If Aenesidemus did not sympathise with these doctrines, the opposite may be the case, i.e. that he put them forward in order to reduce them, and, beyond them, some corresponding Stoic ideas, *ad absurdum*. Thus, on Burkhard's account, the Sceptical ingredient of Aenesidemus' interpretation is not to be found in the actual content of these doctrines, but in the adoption of a dialectical/eristic procedure.

Burkhard's claim, that Aenesidemus as a Sceptical authority is not likely to have taken sides on traditional issues of the philosophical agenda, such as the question of what is true and what the soul is, in the way his Heraclitus does, is fair enough. However, Burkhard's conclusion does not follow. It may well be the case that Aenesidemus is not committed to the doctrines that he attributes to Heraclitus, and yet that these doctrines do voice Sceptical ideas below the surface, thus playing a positive role in his interpretation of Heraclitus. Burkhard does not consider this possibility, and the omission is, I believe, fatal to the whole edifice: his monograph provides valuable analyses of the texts, but his adoption of the *reductio ad absurdum* hypothesis prevents him from going beyond the Stoic colouring of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines.

A more fruitful approach, then, is that of those commentators who claim affinity between Scepticism and Heracliteanism in Aenesidemus. Natorp himself addresses the problem of the Sceptical implications of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' doctrines only as regards the criterion of *that-which-appears-to-us-all*. Von Arnim is the one who

³⁷⁷ Pérez's doctoral dissertation is, as yet, unpublished.

sets out to detect Sceptical hints throughout the doctrines in question, and his discussion contains valuable intuitions, which unfortunately he did not pursue as they deserve, but which nonetheless make his contribution to the debate probably the most helpful, despite his questionable emphasis on flux.

My own contribution is to detect other possible Scepticising motifs which escaped von Arnim's notice, and to develop his intuitions into a more comprehensive and articulated picture. My contention is that the doctrines which Aenesidemus attributes to Heraclitus do bring about a Sceptical representation of Heraclitus, and that it is precisely by bending Heraclitus' original sayings, so as to have them voice phenomenalist ideas, that Aenesidemus purports to make Scepticism a path towards the understanding of Heraclitus. I now sum up the headings of my interpretation.

The criterion of truth which Aenesidemus foists onto Heraclitus, that universally agreed sense-reports alone are true, and that all others are false, rephrases in fictitiously positive terms, as if it enabled us to find something true, the Sceptical universality requirement, thus bringing about suspension of judgement. However, there is something puzzling in Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' criterion. This is the restriction of the scope of the universality requirement to sense-objects alone. This restriction relies on the assumption that sense-objects have a different ontological status from thought-objects. As I argue, this assumption is echoed in Sceptical material attributable to Aenesidemus, and is one of the keynotes of his phenomenism, his 'appearance' being identifiable with the content of sensation.

The account of the soul that Aenesidemus attributes to Heraclitus is consistent with this phenomenism. The soul is merely one's breath. Sensation results from the breath's flowing through certain channels of the body (= the nerves), and thinking is a by-product of sensing. This account of the soul is popular among Hellenistic physicians, but not among philosophers of the time, let alone early philosophers such as Heraclitus. Commentators have usually understood these doctrines as comparable to dogmatic theories of the kind the Sceptics oppose, thus missing what is special about them. The question of why Aenesidemus incorporates them into his exegesis of Heraclitus has therefore gone unanswered. In fact, however, physicians had advanced these doctrines, on the basis of allegedly experimental observations, in order to combat the idea that the soul and its activities are prior to the body and its functioning. My contention is

that Aenesidemus appropriates parts of this reductionist account of the soul in his exegesis of Heraclitus, because it provides a suitable foundation for his denial of knowledge beyond appearances.

To the extent that I imply that Aenesidemus sympathises with at least some of the doctrines that he attributes to Heraclitus, I rescue one of the cornerstones of Natorp's interpretation. There is, however, a difference. Natorp believes that Aenesidemus claimed allegiance to Heraclitus, thus facing the difficulty of justifying how a Sceptic could entertain theoretical beliefs of the kind Aenesidemus does καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, without falling into contradiction. This is a real difficulty. One must bear in mind that Aenesidemus censures contemporary Academics for ideas which look far less distant from Scepticism than, say, his Heraclitus' making the principle of things air. To remedy this difficulty, Natorp launches into an elaborate argument to the effect that a Sceptic is allowed to entertain theoretical beliefs, provided he does not commit himself to them. On this view, the Academics were for Aenesidemus wrong, not because they entertained beliefs, but because they dogmatically yielded to them.

My own view is that Aenesidemus did not claim allegiance to Heraclitus. I do maintain that Aenesidemus incorporates phenomenalist ideas into his exegesis of Heraclitus. And, of course, I also maintain that Aenesidemus is sympathetic to these ideas. This interpretation, however, does not commit me to the view that Aenesidemus sympathises with his 'Heraclitean' doctrines as such. These are merely pieces of his exegesis. Therefore, I do not need to appeal to any speculation to the effect that Aenesidemus, or any other Sceptic, is allowed to entertain theoretical beliefs. Thus, for instance, I am not compelled to think that Aenesidemus, when making Heraclitus' principle of things air, is thereby endorsing the idea that there is such thing as a material principle, and that this principle is air.³⁷⁸ It is only his Heraclitus that endorses this idea. My claim is, rather, that Aenesidemus advances this unorthodox interpretation, because it provides an intermediate step towards his identification of Heraclitus' soul with breathed air, which, in connection with other parts of his 'Heraclitean' account of the soul, does have phenomenalist implications. As emerges from this example, I do not suggest that all elements of Aenesidemus' exegesis contain phenomenalist ideas to the same degree, and that they all play the same role within his

³⁷⁸ Of course neither Natorp thinks so, but the interpretative framework which he proposes falls short from justifying why this should not be the case.

exegetical manoeuvre: the universality requirement which underpins his 'Heraclitean' criterion of truth is a Sceptical tenet, other pieces of his interpretation are not. But there is no problem about that: the only requirement of my hypothesis is that *cumulatively* they contribute to a Sceptic-friendly account of Heraclitus, not that every single instance of them should directly express Scepticism. And actually they do contribute to it, to judge from *M.* 7.126-134, a text, the only one available to us, which presents various pieces of Aenesidemus' exegesis in a sequence of coherent thoughts culminating in the claim that only that-which-appears-to-us-all is true.

The composite nature of Aenesidemus' manoeuvre may explain why his 'Heraclitean' doctrines also have Stoic colouring. This colouring may appear fatal to any hypothesis suggesting their compatibility with Scepticism: for why does Aenesidemus incorporate parts of the Stoic interpretation of Heraclitus, if his purpose is to develop a Sceptical account of Heraclitus? I believe Burkhard is right in postulating that Aenesidemus draws on a pre-existing Stoic account of Heraclitus. Unsurprisingly so. The Stoic interpretation of Heraclitus is the authoritative one in Aenesidemus' day. Aenesidemus might have felt obliged to take into account the *status quaestionis*, and to proceed from that, in the same way as anyone would. Nevertheless, his incorporation of Stoic material, to the extent that this material merely provides the basis of his own interpretation, by no means conflicts with the hypothesis that the outcome of his manoeuvre is a Sceptic-friendly account of Heraclitus. I agree with Burkhard that Aenesidemus is thereby challenging the Stoic interpretation, in the sense that his own interpretation goes beyond and conflicts with it. But I cannot follow Burkhard in his other claim, that Aenesidemus' exegesis amounts to a grand *reductio ad absurdum* of Stoicism. Aenesidemus' goal is not to tease the Stoics. It is, rather, to show that Heraclitus is best understood in the light of Scepticism.

Hence we are also able to answer the question of why Aenesidemus concentrated on Heraclitus alone, and why he disregarded all those other eminent early philosophers which Sceptical Academics had claimed as their forerunners. As a closer examination of the doctrines that he attributed to Heraclitus suggests, Aenesidemus' purpose was not to make the commonsensical point that caution is required before making statements, and to retroject this point onto Heraclitus. His purpose is, rather, to provide a comprehensive and structured account of Heraclitus' putative system, which is centred on

the claim that sense-objects are incorrigible data; that undecidable conflict is, therefore, the *ratio* of things; and that we should all stick to this phenomenal truth. I have suggested that this claim is a part of Aenesidemus' Scepticism.

But what exactly does Aenesidemus' Scepticism comprise of in this case? And how does it relate to later formulations of Scepticism such as Sextus'? This is the crucial question which the book touches upon, but unavoidably leaves open. I pursue this issue, because asking whether the doctrines that Aenesidemus attributes to Heraclitus voice Scepticism is nonsense, without first establishing what *his* Scepticism amounts to, or at least identifying some of its elements. However, this identification is no easy task. The Sceptics are fond of arguments against competing schools, but when it comes to declaring their own ideas, they become disappointingly timid, or even profess not to have any. But, of course, they do have some. The problem is that the Sceptics are not willing to formalise, and argue for their ideas.³⁷⁹ Any attempt to detect them remains, therefore, conjectural. This consideration applies still more to authors, such as Aenesidemus, for whom we have only indirect reports, and a limited number of them.

Thus, my procedure has been (1) to look at Sceptical arguments attributable to Aenesidemus, (2) to identify what assumptions these arguments presuppose, and (3) to test whether these assumptions agree with Aenesidemus' denial of knowledge beyond appearances, and hence whether they may be parts of his philosophical system, rather than dialectical concessions. The reader may be disappointed not to find a systematic and comprehensive account of Aenesidemus' Scepticism. But my purpose here has been merely to pinpoint those aspects which are echoed in his account of Heraclitus. Therefore, the sample of texts and sources on Aenesidemus' Scepticism discussed is only a selection of those available. In particular, it does not include the source which Diels deemed to be the most complete and accurate one for Aenesidemus, namely Photius' résumé of the *Pyrrhonist Discourses*.³⁸⁰ The findings of recent scholars, according to whom Photius often quotes Aenesidemus' *ipsissima verba*,³⁸¹ could have been taken to strengthen Diels' claim that any reconstruction of Aenesidemus

³⁷⁹ Sextus' exposition of Sceptical doctrine in the first book of *PH* contains interesting material, and yet it is affected by his over-caution in committing himself to any argument and idea, and therefore is less telling than one might have hoped.

³⁸⁰ Diels (1879), p. 211: *Aenesidemum qui vere intellegere voluerit, a Photii Pyrrhonorum librorum excerpto c.212 proficisci debet.*

³⁸¹ Janáček (1976); Cortassa (1977).

proceed from Photius. This claim, however, definitely needs qualification.

The core of Aenesidemus' Scepticism is arguably his phenomenism, which according to Diogenes Laertius 9.106 (= Pyrrho T. 8 DC) Aenesidemus expounded in the first book of his *Pyrrhonists Discourses*. But no mention, let alone discussion, of appearances is found in Photius. Thus, if one were to rely on Photius alone, one would miss the core itself of Aenesidemus' Scepticism. Photius' silence, however, is no accident: his unique point of interest, as he himself declares, are Aenesidemus' eristic arguments. In Photius' view, acquaintance with them is necessary to those who pursue philosophy: *know your enemy and you will defeat him*, as one could paraphrase him.³⁸² Accordingly, his account only covers the *pars destruens* of Aenesidemus' argument. One suspects that, in the same way as Photius skips over Aenesidemus' notion of appearances, he may be bypassing other important aspects of Aenesidemus' thought. Thus, Photius' account needs to be integrated with the reports provided by other sources, and I offer extensive arguments to the effect that the attribution of full-blooded sensualism to Aenesidemus agrees with the argument pattern which he employs in the *Pyrrhonist Discourses*, instances of which are found in Sextus. In this way it is possible to identify at least aspects of Aenesidemus' philosophical system, along the lines of what I call 'Sceptical sensualism'.

Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' material is important, because it offers us the opportunity to see that system in operation, when it comes to interpreting other philosophers, thus giving us additional clues as to what it comprises. True, Aenesidemus here is no longer speaking *in propria persona*. Therefore, caution is necessary. Nevertheless, it is hardly deniable that the perspective from which he looks at Heraclitus, the ideas which he attributes to him, and his emphasis on certain aspects of Heraclitus' philosophy as against others, all relate to his conceptual framework, and, therefore, that a correct understanding of them may give us insight into his philosophical system. If this is correct, a solution to the question of Aenesidemus' alleged Heracliteanism is not merely the solution to an erudite puzzle for a small circle of experts, but an important step towards a better evaluation of this crucial figure of ancient Scepticism.

³⁸² Phot. *Bibl.* 212 170b 35 - 171a 4.

APPENDIX I
TIME (SEXT EMP. M 10.216-218)

While discussing the meaning of Aenesidemus' description of Scepticism as a path towards Heracliteanism, I have argued that the reference is to a Sceptical introduction to the philosophy of Heraclitus, and I have suggested that the most obvious reason for Aenesidemus to have embarked on this enterprise is because he detected some Sceptical hints in Heraclitus' philosophy. A closer examination of the doctrines which Aenesidemus attributed to Heraclitus has confirmed this interpretation, provided that by 'Sceptical hints' one understands theoretical ideas bringing about a phenomenalist attitude to knowledge, rather than Sceptical tenets as such, and provided that one refers to Aenesidemus' Scepticism, rather than Sextus' own (I have tried to show what differences there may have been between the two in the second and third chapters). However, one piece of Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus remains to be discussed. This is the thesis that time is corporeal, as reported by Sextus at M. 10.216-218, a testimony which I have already mentioned in connection with the title of Aenesidemus' 'Heraclitean' work *First Introduction*:

Aenesidemus stated that, according to Heraclitus, time is a body, in that it does not differ from the existent and the first body. Hence, when he mentions in the *First Introduction* that the simple appellations, which are the parts of speech, apply to six things, he asserts that the nouns 'time' and 'unit' are applied to the substance (which is corporeal), whereas temporal magnitudes and also numbers are arrived at essentially by multiplication. For the 'now', which is the way in which time manifests itself to us, and unit are nothing else than the substance, whereas day, month and year are multiples of the 'now' (I mean, of time), and two, three, ten and hundred are multiples of unit. On these grounds these philosophers make time a body.³⁸³

³⁸³ (216) σώμα μὲν οὖν ἔλεξεν εἶναι τὸν χρόνον Αἰνησιδῆμος κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον· μὴ διαφέρειν γὰρ αὐτὸν τοῦ ὄντος καὶ τοῦ πρώτου σώματος. ὅθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς πρώτης εἰσαγωγῆς κατὰ ἑξ̄ πραγμάτων τετάχθαι λέγων τὰς ἀπλᾶς λέξεις, αἵτινες μέρη τοῦ λόγου τυγχάνουσι, τὴν μὲν "χρόνος" προσηγορίαν καὶ τὴν "μονάς" ἐπὶ τῆς οὐσίας τετάχθαι φησίν, ἥτις ἐστὶ σωματική, (217) τὰ δὲ μεγέθη τῶν χρόνων καὶ τὰ κεφάλαια τῶν ἀριθμῶν ἐπὶ πολυπλασιασμοῦ μάλιστα ἐκφέρεσθαι. τὸ μὲν γὰρ νῦν, ὃ δὴ χρόνου μῆνυμά ἐστιν, ἔτι δὲ τὴν μονάδα οὐκ ἄλλο τι εἶναι ἢ τὴν οὐσίαν, τὴν δὲ ἡμέραν καὶ

The context is a diaphonic account of the views held by dogmatic philosophers concerning the substance of time (215). Three entries are covered: that of Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, who makes time a body (215-218); that of the Stoics, who make it incorporeal (218); and, finally, that of the Epicurus, who makes it an accident of accidents (219).

Aenesidemus' thesis *prima facie* resists any exegesis in terms of a Sceptical interpretation of Heraclitus. For how could making time a body contribute to that? It is for this reason that those commentators who have suggested that Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus merely purported to reduce *ad absurdum* the claimed forerunner of the Stoics, and, beyond him, the Stoics themselves, have found this text congenial: making time a body is so bizarre an idea that nobody could sensibly put it forward; if Aenesidemus did so, it will be for the sake of argument, that is, in order to urge some undesirable consequences of a corporealist ontology such as that of the Stoa.³⁸⁴

However, this approach to the text is far too simplistic. The Sextus report consists of two parts: one is the doxographical rendering of Aenesidemus' thesis (216 *init.*); the other is the actual report of Aenesidemus (216 *fin.* - 217), which Sextus quotes in support of it (218 *init.*). It is almost too obvious to observe that, if we are to recover Aenesidemus' point, and assess whether it contains any Sceptical, or Scepticising, hint, we should in the first place consider his own words. Sextus' doxographical reduction of Aenesidemus' thesis can be used only as indirect evidence for it, which may, but need not, express Aenesidemus' thought accurately.

If one just considers what Aenesidemus said, his own point appears to concern the relationship between the grammatical status of the parts of speech and the ontological status of their significates. Aenesidemus focuses on the common nouns 'time' and 'unit', which, he claims, connote being. In what follows Aenesidemus goes on to explain that time *qua* now is a being, on the grounds that it is an

τὸν μῆνα καὶ τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν πολυπλασιασμὸν ὑπάρχειν τοῦ νῦν (φημὶ δὲ τοῦ χρόνου), τὰ δὲ δύο καὶ τρία καὶ δέκα καὶ ἑκατὸν πολυπλασιασμὸν εἶναι τῆς μονάδος. (218) ὥσθ' οὗτοι μὲν σῶμα ποιοῦσι τὸν χρόνον.

³⁸⁴ Burkhard (1973), pp. 149-155. Against this proposal, Goldschmidt (1976) contends that making time corporeal is not as bizarre as it seems, the Pythagorean thesis that time is the encompassing sphere providing an antecedent for it. But the Pythagoreans do not explicitly make time a body, and however obvious the inference may be, there is no evidence that it had ever been made, either by the Pythagoreans themselves or by opponents and doxographers.

immediate object of our experience, and that other temporal dimensions are arrived at by multiplication of it.

What about the question of the corporeality of time then? There is one element which might suggest that Aenesidemus advocated this thesis: after the claim that the nouns ‘time’ and ‘unit’ connote being, a parenthetical clause occurs, saying that this being is corporeal (ἥτις [ἡ οὐσία] ἐστὶ σωματική). The point is irrelevant to Aenesidemus’ overall argument. On this basis Natorp (1884), p. 110 and von Arnim (1888), p. 89 have hypothesised that it is a gloss interpolated by Sextus in order to support his doxographical rendering of Aenesidemus’ thesis. Why should Sextus make up this part of his report of Aenesidemus? Because, von Arnim argues, it is Sextus’ game to urge disagreement on any matter whatsoever, regardless of whether there actually is any such disagreement. Sextus needed to have someone advocate the bizarre thesis that time is a body. To this purpose he interfered in Aenesidemus’ original text, and added a gloss, so as to make Aenesidemus say what he wanted.

While it is true that Sextus had reasons of his own for having Aenesidemus advocate this thesis, and that some twisting on Sextus’ part cannot therefore be ruled out, postulating interpolations and inventions *ex nihilo* is questionable. It is unquestionable, by contrast, that, even if one accepts the direct report of Aenesidemus at 216-217 in its entirety as reliable, Sextus’ attribution of the thesis that time is a body to him rests upon a marginal point in the Aenesidemus’ argument. Therefore, the fact that this thesis does not evince, as such, any Sceptical or Scepticising hint provides no counter-evidence against the overall hypothesis that we are dealing with a Sceptical interpretation of Heraclitus. This hypothesis has to be tested against the direct report of Aenesidemus, which I shall now discuss in more detail.

The first point Aenesidemus raises is that, since ‘time’ and ‘unit’ are common nouns, the things thereby signified are οὐσία. The implied premise is that whatever is signified by either a common or a proper noun is by definition a being. This idea is well attested both among Stoics and grammarians, the latter being influenced by the former.³⁸⁵ The legacy of this idea can be seen in modern languages in the word ‘substantive’, which stems from the Latin for οὐσία, and

³⁸⁵ Fr. 564 Hülser: ὄνομα κύριον μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ τὴν ἰδίαν οὐσίαν σημαίνον [...] ὄνομα προσηγορικὸν δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ τὴν κοινὴν οὐσίαν σημαίνον. The Stoics at Diog. L. 7.57 (= Fr. 536 Hülser) speak of ποιότης, rather than οὐσία. Both ‘substance’ and ‘quality’ are named in Fr. 563 Hülser.

indicates any noun whatsoever. There were different figures concerning the number of parts of speech. Aenesidemus for his part goes for the sixfold partition proposed by the Stoic philosopher Antipater of Tarsus (head of the school 152-129 BC). Chrysippus' five parts of speech are proper nouns, common nouns, verbs, articles, conjunctions. Antipater's addition is thought to be the adverbs.³⁸⁶

But what is the relevance of Stoic grammar to Heraclitus' notion of time? To answer this question one should bear in mind that Heraclitus himself in fr. 1 puts strong emphasis on the parallelism between words and things, suggesting that analysing the structure and elements of speech (λόγος) is a way of understanding the nature of things. Thus, one may suppose that Aenesidemus incorporated the Stoic account of the parts of speech (μέρη τοῦ λόγου) in that it provides a suitable tool for explaining Heraclitus, and one which conforms to Heraclitus' own methodology.

Why did Aenesidemus specifically adopt Antipater's version of it? One might have thought that it was because Antipater's version was the authoritative one in Aenesidemus' day. But in fact there is no evidence that anybody else adopted it except Antipater himself and Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον. The authoritative Stoic account appears to have remained the fivefold partition proposed by Chrysippus,³⁸⁷ if not the fourfold one as theorised by Zeno.³⁸⁸ Grammarians for their part adopted a division into eight parts as early as the time of Aristarchus (first half of the second century BC).³⁸⁹

If Aenesidemus' incorporation of Antipater's sixfold partition does not lend itself to being accounted for in terms of appropriating the most up-to-date or authoritative theory, and if, on the other hand, there is nothing in it which justifies privileging it over others, why did Aenesidemus specifically refer to it? A possible answer is that he did not himself appropriate Antipater's account, but found the reference to it already incorporated in the Stoic exegesis of Heraclitus on which he superimposed his own. That Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus amounted to a reworking of a piece of Stoic exegesis of Heraclitus has emerged from our discussion of Sextus' account of Heraclitus' criterion at *M.* 7.127-134. In the light of the echo of Antipater's

³⁸⁶ Diog. L. 7.57 (= Fr. 536 Hülser), but Diogenes leaves unspecified what this new part of speech, identified only as μεσότης, comprised.

³⁸⁷ Frs. 536A; 543-6; 548-549 Hülser.

³⁸⁸ Frs. 537-538 Hülser; it is attributed to Chrysippus as well in Fr. 539.

³⁸⁹ Frs. 544; 546-547.

division of speech which is found at *M.* 10.217, one may hypothesise that Aenesidemus' Stoic direct source is datable to the mid-second century BC, around the time when Antipater was the head of the Stoa. It is true that the Stoics themselves were not, one should think, committed to the conclusion that time is real, since for them time counts among the incorporeals. But this is a different matter from invoking the general theory in order to explain Heraclitus.

While the reference to grammar within the context of a discussion of Heraclitus' ontology is not surprising after all, there is however an oddity here: it is one ontological implication of the Stoic account of the parts of speech that any noun whatsoever connotes beings, and hence bodies. This is the case with nouns such as 'man', 'horse', which connote the corresponding types of beings. But what type of being do the nouns 'time' and 'unit' connote? The text leaves it unspecified. Sextus at 216 *init.* understands Aenesidemus as referring to being itself and the primary body (τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον σῶμα). Perhaps Sextus is adding his own elaboration. On the other hand, he had no particular reason for doing so, since the claim that time is *a* body does not demand any specific reference to the primary body. If Sextus does identify the being of which Aenesidemus speaks with the primary body, it may well be the case that the original context in Aenesidemus suggested this (although Aenesidemus' vagueness is probably no accident, as we shall see).

One may suppose that Aenesidemus attributed a special status to the nouns 'time' and 'unit', and thought that they connote being itself, on the grounds that they are all-embracing. As regards 'unit', Aenesidemus could appeal to what Heraclitus himself said concerning the unity of the whole in sayings such as fr. 50: "it is wise to agree that all things are one", or fr. 10: "from all things one, and from one all things".³⁹⁰ None of the Heraclitean sayings which have come down to us makes the comparable claim that time is an all-embracing reality. However, we do have an indirect testimony on Heraclitus where time is presented in terms which may invite interpretations such as that of Aenesidemus. This is the quotation of the Heracliteanising fourth-century BC poet Scythinus which is found at Stobaeus I 8 43 (=

³⁹⁰ True, Aenesidemus in what follows at 217 appears to be referring specifically to the mathematical One, of which all other numbers are multiples, whereas Heraclitus did not make any connection between 'his' One (which in effect is merely a qualification of his material principle; see Fr. 90) and the unit of measure of numbers. However, it is hardly debatable that within a discussion of Heraclitus' ontology the ultimate reference point must be the ontological One.

C 3): “Time is the last and the first of all things, and has everything in itself, and is always one and not one”.³⁹¹ Assuming that Scythinus is here echoing some lost saying of Heraclitus, this text may be taken to suggest that Heraclitus himself made time an all-embracing principle. A personification of time nearly as a cosmic agent is already found in Anaximander fr. 110: things come-to-be and pass away ‘according to the assessment of Time’ (κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν).³⁹² Pythagoras’ identification of time as the encompassing sphere provides another instance of it.

While up to this point Aenesidemus’ discussion of time καθ’ Ἡράκλειτον is easily reconcilable with Heraclitus’ thought pattern, and elaborates on what one may hypothesise to have been a pre-existing Stoic interpretation of Heraclitus, the subsequent discussion of the ‘now’ and its multiples is the most idiosyncratic and puzzling part of his argument:

He [Aenesidemus] asserts that the nouns ‘time’ and ‘unit’ are applied to the substance (which is corporeal), whereas temporal magnitudes and also numbers are arrived at essentially by multiplication.

The explanation follows that the ‘now’, which is the way in which time manifests itself to us (μήνυμα χρόνου), and unit amount to being. Temporal dimensions such as day, month and year, as well as numbers such as two, three, ten and hundred are arrived at by multiplication of the ‘now’ and unit respectively. Thus, on this account, temporal dimensions and numbers partake of reality only indirectly, by sharing that of unit and the ‘now’ (e.g. the number two has reality in that it is two times one; likewise day, which is made of n nows, has reality in that it is n times the ‘now’).

An initial problem which the text raises concerns the transition from ‘time’ at 216 to the ‘now’ at 217. Of course, Aenesidemus could not make his point concerning the ontological status of the significates of nouns by appealing to the term ‘now’, which is an adverb. This is also, presumably, the reason why Aenesidemus speaks of

³⁹¹ χρόνος ἐστὶν ὕστατον καὶ πρῶτον πάντων, καὶ ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῷ πάντα, καὶ ἔστιν εἷς αἰεὶ καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν κτλ. (The rest of the text seems corrupt and beyond recovery). The Stobaeus quotation does not conform to the metre that we know Scythinus adopted in his poem *On the Nature of Things*, from which the passage is derived, and this suggests that we are dealing with a paraphrase, rather than a quotation proper. The version printed by Diels and Kranz as C 3 is the result of a substantial reworking by Wilamowitz. I owe the reference to Skythinus to Spinelli (1997), p. 162; p. 168 n. 22.

³⁹² See Kirk, Raven and Schofield (1984), pp. 117-118.

‘monas’, rather than ‘one’ (τὸ ἓν), whose grammatical classification may have been open to dispute. However, ‘time’ and ‘now’ are not synonyms, and Aenesidemus’ transition from the former to the latter presupposes the assumption that the ‘now’ is the constituent part of time, time as a whole being thinkable as a series of ‘nows’. Aenesidemus’ implicit identification of the ‘now’ as a time-atom stands outside mainstream ancient accounts of time. The Stoics for instance, to whom Aenesidemus owes much of his interpretation of Heraclitus, considered the present to be divisible into past and future, and thus not even as a part of time in its own right.³⁹³

Thus, Aenesidemus here departs from what any Stoic commentator on Heraclitus could be expected to say, and also goes beyond anything Heraclitus himself ever thought of, although his attempt to identify a unique temporal dimension from which to derive all others finds specious support in sayings such as fr. 57 (“The teacher of most is Hesiod. It is him they know as knowing most, who did not recognise day and night: they are one”) or fr. 106 (“Hesiod counted some days as good, others as bad, because he did not recognise that the nature of every day is one and the same”).

However, it is not the relationship between different temporal dimensions that seems to be Aenesidemus’ concern. Rather, the point concerns what sort of reality is attributable to time, and the reference to the ‘now’ serves the purpose of spelling out the epistemic status of this reality, which Aenesidemus identified with that of an object of immediate experience (μῆνυμα). What does this reality comprise? Von Arnim speaks of “die Summe aller uns in einem Zeitmoment zukommenden *phantasiai*”, the now being “der einfachste Bestandteil der Erscheinungswelt”. A similar interpretation is found in Krüger and Conche.³⁹⁴ This reading gains support from the fact that Aenesidemus attributed reality to sensory data (see above ch.III.1), which are the primary objects of our immediate experience.

In spite of the fact that Sextus in his doxographical rendering of Aenesidemus’ thesis at 216 *init.* mentions time alone, what follows in the text makes it clear that not only time but also unit were on Aenesidemus’ agenda. It is very much a matter of speculation to assess exactly how Aenesidemus’ point concerning the now and its multiples purported to contribute to his exegesis of Heraclitus. But it

³⁹³ Plut. *Comm. not.* 1081C-1082A = LS 51C.

³⁹⁴ Von Arnim (1888), p. 90; Krüger (1924); Conche (1984), p. 129.

is one implication of the argument that the reality of time is comparable with, indeed the same as, that of the One. And at least in the case of the One we know that for Heraclitus the One was the supreme genus from which things derive and to which they are ultimately reducible (cf. fr. 10 quoted above). If the reality of time is that of an object of immediate experience, the reality which is attributable to the One and to things in general will have a similar epistemic status. But how exactly?

In what follows Aenesidemus shifts from the ontological One to the mathematical One, and goes on to claim that the One alone, as opposed to its multiples, possesses reality of its own. If the case of the ontological One is comparable with that of the mathematical One, and hence if numbers provide a model for things in general, one should think that Aenesidemus thereby intended to make the point that the One, as opposed to the many, is an immediate object of experience and real. This thesis may seem counter-intuitive. After all, nature manifests itself to us at the level of the many. However, if Aenesidemus' goal is that of explaining Heraclitus, he has good reason for putting emphasis on the level of the One: Heraclitus' claim that truth and knowledge are attainable only at the level of that-which-is-common relies precisely on the assumption that the whole is a compact unity, and that its parts, the many, are not cognitively accessible in their own right.

Of course, it cannot be the case that Aenesidemus has Heraclitus deny that we have experience of the many. The point may be, rather, that the experience we have of them does not amount to knowledge of the ratio of things (that is, strife), this being accessible only at the omni-comprehensive level of the One (fr. 89: 'the world of the waking is one and shared, but the sleeping turn aside each into his private world'). However, since for Aenesidemus Heraclitus' truth is a *phenomenal* truth ('that-which-appears-to-us-all'), it is not surprising if he identifies the essence of the One with that of an immediate object of experience. In this way he might have hoped to reconcile the various Heraclitean claims concerning the reality of things with phenomenalism.

True, there is a gap between this phenomenal οὐσία and that which applies to the primary body referred to by Sextus at 216 *init.* This is one of von Arnim's grounds for hypothesising that Sextus misunderstood, or deliberately misrepresented, the point. However, if my account of the way in which Aenesidemus' exegesis developed

has some plausibility, one may easily accept the fact that the argument contains a transition from one notion of οὐσία to the other. After all, this would not be the first occasion in which Aenesidemus is found playing with ambiguities of words. A parallel for this is the way in which the notions περιέχον and κοινὸς λόγος are treated in Sextus' account of Heraclitus' criterion of truth, which is attributable to Aenesidemus. At both *M.* 10.216-217 and *M.* 7.127-134 Aenesidemus is found drawing, somewhat by force, phenomenalist conclusions out of Stoic-Heraclitean material. It is unfortunate that the absence of the original context of Aenesidemus' discussion of time and unit leaves much of it in the dark, and that the conclusions one may arrive at are therefore necessarily conjectural.

One might have hoped that Sextus' refutation of Aenesidemus' thesis at 230-233 would give some clue as to how to understand it. But in fact it is of very little help:

Against those who maintain that the substance of time is corporeal, I mean the Heracliteans, we should bring the argument most ready to hand that if time is a body, and every body is conceived as either at rest or in motion, and what is at rest or in motion is conceived as at rest or in motion in time <then the time is conceived as being at rest or in motion in a body>; but the body is not conceived as being at rest or in motion in a body; therefore time is not a body. Also, according to the Heracliteans, the existent, which is a body, is in time, but time is not in time; therefore the existent and body is not time. Also, the living being lives in time, as also the dead is dead in time; wherefore time is not a living being or a body. Moreover, those who assert that the first element of Heraclitus does not exist are not precluded from conceiving time, but if time had been the first body of Heraclitus, they would have been precluded; therefore the existent of Heraclitus is not time. Also, the existent of Heraclitus, as Aenesidemus says, is air; but time is vastly different from air, and just as nobody says that fire or water or earth is time, so for the same reason nobody will say that air is time; so, then, the existent it not time.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁵ (230) πρὸς δὲ τοὺς σωματικὴν ἀξιούντας εἶναι τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ χρόνου, φημὶ δὲ τοὺς Ἡρακλειτεῖους, κινεῖτο προχειρότατον, ὅτι εἰ χρόνος σῶμά ἐστι, πᾶν δὲ σῶμα ἢ μένον ἢ κινούμενον νοεῖται, τὸ δὲ μένον ἢ κινούμενον ἐν χρόνῳ μένον ἢ κινούμενον νοεῖται ἢ οὐχὶ δὲ γε ἐν σώματι τὸ σῶμα μένον ἢ κινούμενον νοεῖται, οὐκ ἄρα σῶμά ἐστιν ὁ χρόνος. (231) τὸ τε ὄν κατὰ τοὺς Ἡρακλειτεῖους, ὃ δὴ σῶμά ἐστιν, ἐν χρόνῳ ἐστίν· οὐχὶ δὲ γε ὁ χρόνος ἐν χρόνῳ ἐστίν· οὐκ ἄρα τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ σῶμα χρόνος ἐστίν. τὸ τε ζῶον ἐν χρόνῳ ζῇ, ὥς καὶ τὸ τεθνηκὸς ἐν χρόνῳ τέθνηκεν· διὸ οὐκ ἐστὶ ζῶον ἢ σῶμα ὁ χρόνος. (232) καὶ μὴν οἱ λέγοντες μὴ ὑπάρχειν τὸ πρῶτον σῶμα κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον οὐ κωλύονται χρόνον νοεῖν· εἰ δὲ γε χρόνος ἦν τὸ πρῶτον κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον σῶμα, κἂν ἐκωλύοντο τὸν χρόνον νοεῖν· οὐκ ἄρα τὸ ὄν κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον ἐστὶ χρόνος. (233) τὸ τε ὄν κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον ἀήρ ἐστίν, ὥς φησὶν ὁ Αἰνισίδημος, μακρῷ δὲ ἀέρος διέφερον ὁ χρόνος, καὶ ὃ λόγῳ οὐθεὶς τὸ πῦρ ἢ τὸ ὕδωρ

Sextus' refutation is divided into two parts. At 230-232 he expounds three arguments against the thesis that time is a body, here attributed directly to the 'Heracliteans': πρὸς δὲ τοὺς σωματικὴν ἀξιοῦντας εἶναι τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ χρόνου, φημὶ δὲ τοὺς Ἡρακλειτεῖους κτλ. Taking this text as evidence for the existence of some followers of Heraclitus who indeed made time corporeal would, however, be wrong. Sextus is considering the purely hypothetical situation of some people who commit themselves to the claim attributed by Aenesidemus to Heraclitus, and whom he therefore describes as 'Heracliteans'. The fact that Sextus does not identify these people with Aenesidemus fits in very well with the hypothesis that Aenesidemus' role is merely that of an exegete. Unfortunately, none of these arguments considers Aenesidemus' thesis in its own terms as expounded in the direct report at 216-217.

After refuting the theoretical plausibility of making time a body, Sextus goes on to produce an argument which specifically applies to Aenesidemus: *If one accepts Aenesidemus' identification of Heraclitus' primary body with air, it is impossible for time to be the primary body, since time is a different thing from air, and in the same way as nobody has ever thought of making time one of the other three elements, so it is also absurd to make time air.* There is not much to comment on here either, except noticing the remarkable phrasing: τὸ ὄν κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον ἄῃρ ἐστίν, ὡς φησὶν ὁ Αἰνησιδημος, which provides evidence to the effect that at least in the case of Aenesidemus' identification of air as Heraclitus' primary body,³⁹⁶ and, one may assume, also in the case of all his other doctrines καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, Sextus was aware that he was dealing with a piece of Heraclitean interpretation, rather than with a doctrine which Aenesidemus himself subscribed.³⁹⁷ This confirms a conclusion which the first part of Sextus' refutation too suggests. Here again, however, Sextus fails to deal with Aenesidemus' actual argument, and thus is of no use for our understanding of the direct report of Aenesidemus at 216-217.

ἢ τὴν γῆν χρόνον λέγει εἶναι, τῷ αὐτῷ οὐδὲ τὸν ἀέρα φήσει· οὐ τοίνυν τὸ ὄν ἐστι χρόνος.

³⁹⁶ This interpretation of Heraclitus is echoed without explicit attribution to Aenesidemus at Sext. Emp. M. 9.360: κατ' ἐνίους Ἡράκλειτος ἀέρα [ἔλεξε πάντων εἶναι ἀρχὴν καὶ στοιχείον]. On its Heraclitean background see above ch. IV.4.

³⁹⁷ Von Arnim (1888), p. 92; Schmekel (1938), p. 315 n. 4.

APPENDIX 2
MOTION (SEXT. EMP. M. 10.38)

Testimonia relevant to Aenesidemus' Heraclitenism in Sextus are usually recognisable by the clause καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, which Sextus adds to his name. However, this rule does not apply invariably. There are at least two reports on Aenesidemus καθ' Ἡράκλειτον in which the formula is missing: *PH* 1.138³⁹⁸ and *M.* 7.350, but which can be nonetheless attributed to him by analogy with parallel testimonies in which Heraclitus is named (*M.* 10.216-218, and Tertullian *De anima* 14, respectively).

A comparable case, some scholars have hypothesised, may be that of Sextus' report at *M.* 10.38:

The majority of philosophers, amongst whom Aenesidemus is included, allow that motion, in its main kinds, is twofold, one sort being that of change, the second that of transition.³⁹⁹

From this passage we learn that Aenesidemus somewhere in his works advanced the claim that there are two types of motion: locomotion and qualitative alteration, thus implicitly conceding that motion exists. Sceptics usually do not make similar concessions. Hence the suspicion may arise that this text is not relevant to Aenesidemus' Scepticism, but rather to his 'Heracliteanism'. Or at least this is what some scholars have hypothesised.⁴⁰⁰ Let us consider the question more closely.

The usual formula καθ' Ἡράκλειτον is missing, but its absence as such does not provide conclusive evidence against the proposed attribution. While there is no compelling reason to reject the attribution, there seems to be, however, little evidence in its support either, starting from the assumption that we are dealing with a view that is 'dogmatic', and thus not attributable to Aenesidemus as a Sceptical

³⁹⁸ οἱ μὲν σῶμα αὐτὸν ἔφασαν εἶναι, ὥς οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον (μηδὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν διαφέρειν τοῦ ὄντος καὶ τοῦ πρώτου σώματος), οἱ δὲ ἀσώματον.

³⁹⁹ οἱ δὲ πλείους, ἐν οἷς εἰσι καὶ οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνησίδημον, διττὴν τινα κατὰ τὸ ἀνωτάτω κίνησιν ἀπολείπουσι, μίαν μὲν τὴν μεταβλητικὴν, δευτέραν δὲ τὴν μεταβατικὴν.

⁴⁰⁰ Dal Pra (1989), II p. 395 n. 73; Conche (1994), p.131; *contra* Natorp (1884), p. 110; von Arnim (1888), p. 92; Burkhard (1973), pp. 135-139.

authority. The twofold division of motion may amount to a dogmatic claim, but it may also be a definition of the matter under review preliminary to its refutation. It is, in effect, a standard Sceptical procedure to provide a definition of the philosophical notions under refutation as widely agreeable as possible. Aenesidemus' definition certainly meets this last requirement: Sextus attributes it to the majority of philosophers, Aenesidemus being merely 'one of them'.⁴⁰¹ Moreover, Sextus himself at *M.* 9.195 tells us that some unspecified 'sophists' used to arrange their arguments against the existence of motion precisely by considering the two cases of locomotion and qualitative alteration. Thus, the difficulty for attributing the text to Aenesidemus as a Sceptical authority is more specious than real.

Sextus for his part thinks that qualitative alteration is itself reducible to locomotion, thus apparently accepting the atomistic definition as expounded at 42-44. Accordingly, he refutes the existence of locomotion only. I suspect that Sextus' goal in mentioning Aenesidemus is to mark the difference between Aenesidemus' refutation of motion, articulated in two arguments, and Sextus' own, which is more economical and thus more consistent with Timon's call for refutations that are as general as possible (cf. *M.* 9.1-2).

Is there anything in the text which might license the suspicion that we are dealing with Heraclitean material instead? Plato at *Theaet* 181d, in the context of a discussion of the epistemological consequences of flux, has the Heracliteans classify motion in a way which is similar to Aenesidemus, and, of course, emphasis on things' being in motion is the premise of any account of flux. I myself have suggested that the flux motif has some echoes in Aenesidemus' interpretation of Heraclitus, in particular with regard to the nature of the soul. However, no reference to flux is found at *M.* 10.38, nor is there anything in this text which suggests that this was the point Aenesidemus wanted to make.⁴⁰² The hypothesis of an echo of Plato's *Theaetetus* is also questionable: first of all, we do not know whether or not Aenesidemus read it; secondly, the twofold division of motion is a thesis which is agreed upon by the majority of the philosophers, as

⁴⁰¹ This is the Greek: οἱ δὲ πλείους, ἐν οἷς εἰσι καὶ οἱ περὶ τὸν Αἰνῆσιδῆμον κτλ.

⁴⁰² It may be interesting to note, however, that the cases of the chameleon and the octopus are also mentioned by Philo in his version of the tropes, notoriously dominated by the flux motif, in a context in which the deceiving effects of qualitative alterations in sense-objects are discussed (*De ebr.* 172).

Sextus also remarks, and thus is not distinctive enough to postulate any direct reminiscence of the Plato passage.

We do not know the original context in Aenesidemus, and therefore one cannot rule out the possibility that flux indeed was the matter under discussion. However, the text brings no support to this hypothesis, which therefore remains a matter of sheer speculation. Even if this were the case, moreover, it would not be of much help, in that the passage does not allow us to make any inference about what role the flux motif may have had.

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